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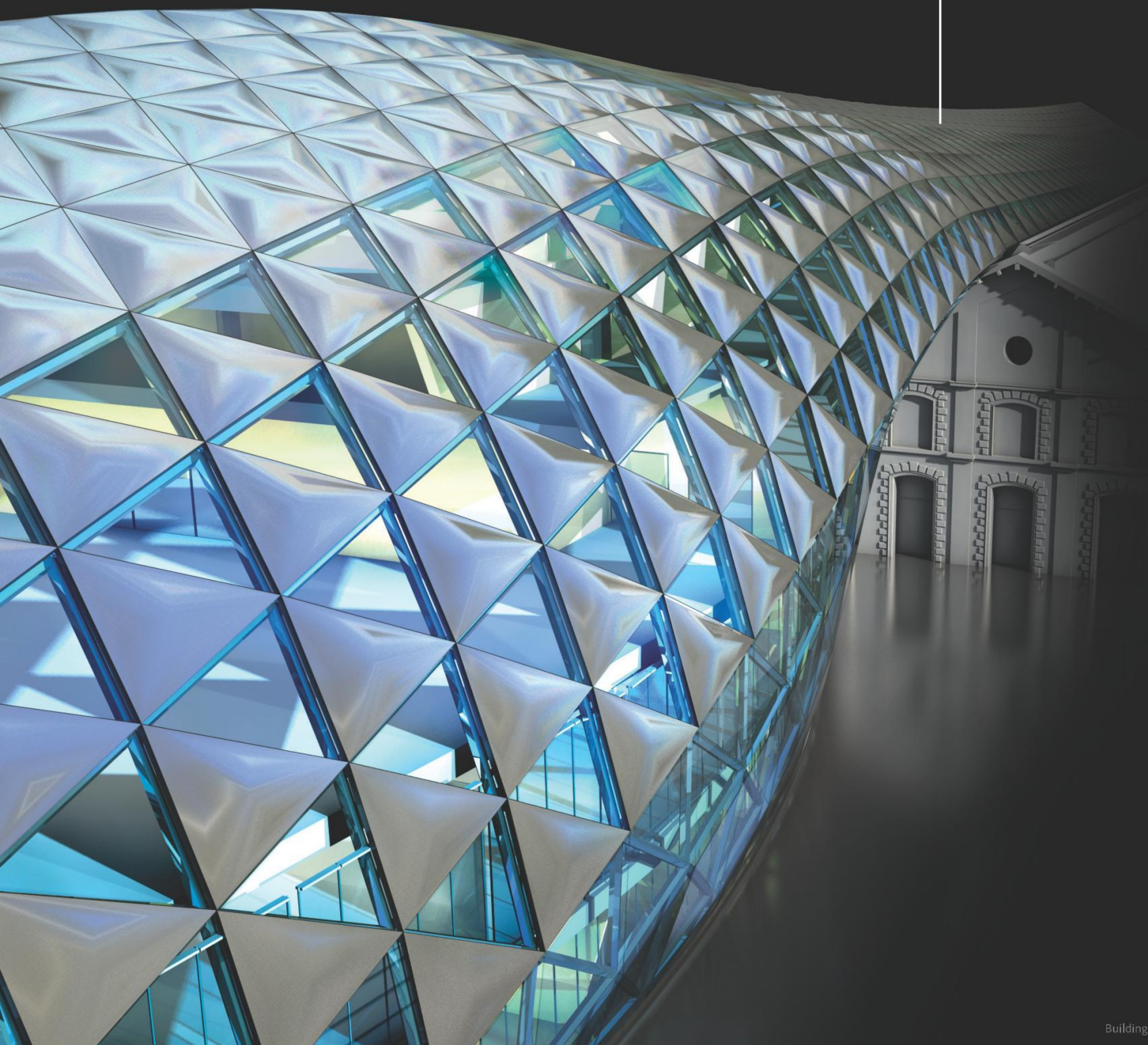


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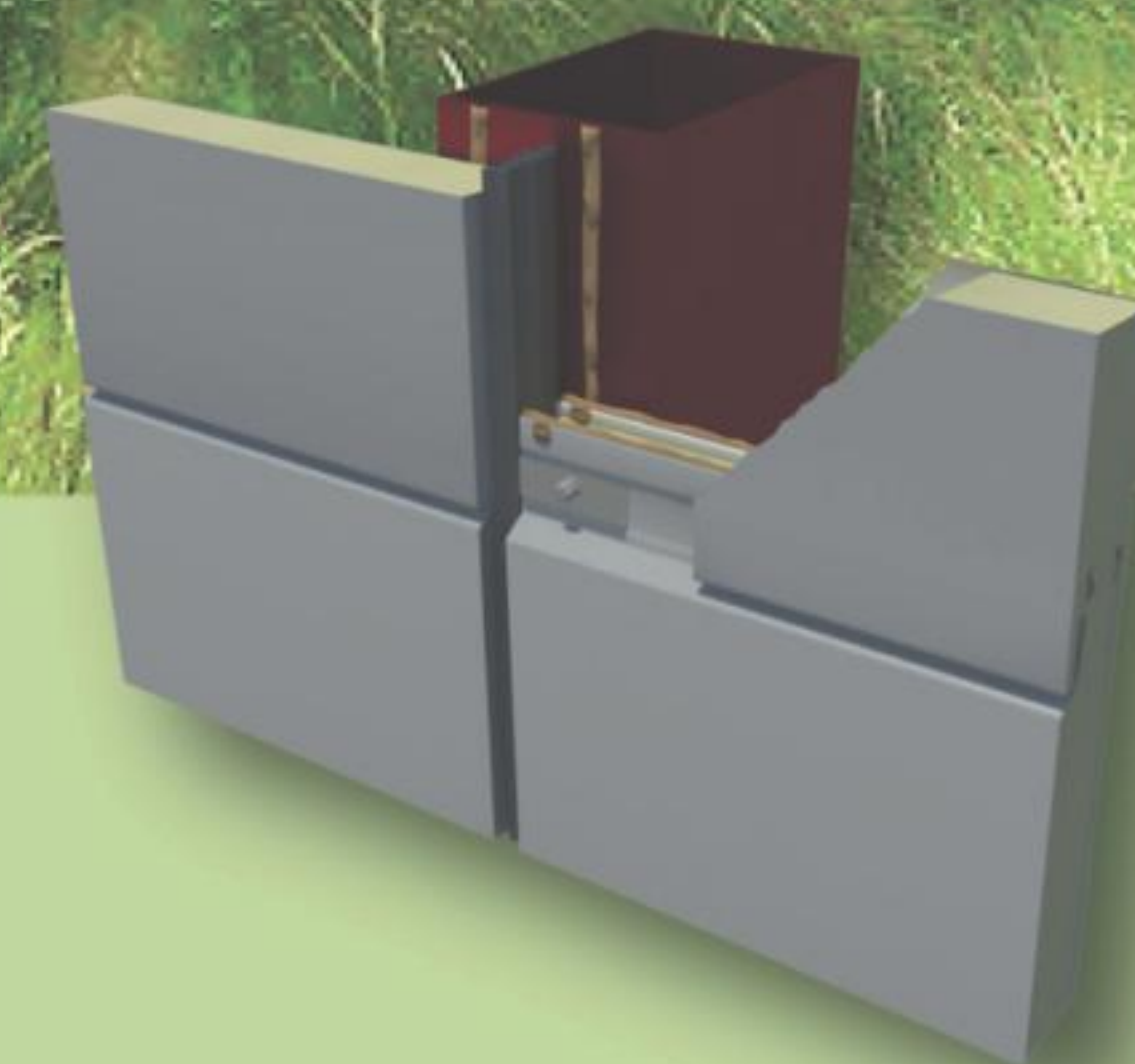
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26 BREAKHOUSE

A HALIFAX-BASED MULTIDISCIPLINARY DESIGN STUDIO FLEXES ITS CREATIVE MUSCLE IN THE AREAS OF BRANDING, INTERIOR DESIGN AND SMALL-SCALE ARCHITECTURE. TEXT NOVA TAYONA

RACHEL TOPHAM



11 NEWS

Diamond and Schmitt Architects to design new concert hall for the Montreal Symphony Orchestra; Toronto architectural firm RVTR wins Canada Council for the Arts Professional Prix de Rome.

31 INSITES

Shelagh McCartney speaks out on how designers can work together to mitigate the chaos erupting in the rapid process of global urbanization.

37 CALENDAR

Building for the Economy at Toronto's Architecture at Harbourfront Centre Gallery; *Quebec in Design* at the Design Exchange.

38 BACKPAGE

Reece Terris's *Ought Apartment* installation at the Vancouver Art Gallery captivates with its massive scale and meticulous attention to the details of domestic living.



ABOVE THE CONSTRUCTION OF ARABIANRANTA BEGAN IN 2000. TODAY, THIS FORMER INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT IS HOME TO NEARLY 7,000 PEOPLE AND IS ONE OF MANY AREAS UNDERGOING LARGE-SCALE REDEVELOPMENT IN HELSINKI.

What do mega-pop star Madonna and Finnish architect Alvar Aalto have in common? They both believe in being absolutely clear about what they want without making unnecessary compromises.

Aalto once said, “Building art is a synthesis of life in materialized form. We should try to bring in under the same hat not a splintered way of thinking, but [a way to achieve] harmony together.” He added, “Architecture is about making synthesis, not compromises.” Perhaps this is why Aalto’s architecture in Helsinki is so harmonious—a place where enormous red granite rocks rest elegantly beside his House of Culture, and where the city’s ubiquitous granite resources form roughly hewn bases for innumerable finely crafted Art Nouveau and Modernist buildings.

According to Madonna, “A lot of people are afraid to say what they want. That’s why they don’t get what they want.” These words of wisdom are echoed in the Helsinki City Planning Department, where planners and architects are very clear in describing the kind of housing they want to see built. Over the past decade, the City has realized many new housing and residential communities with quality architecture, high-density living, easy access to transit and plenty of green space.

Of course, most people will wonder how Helsinki has been able to realize high-quality multi-unit housing. To Hannu Penttilä, the Deputy Mayor of Helsinki responsible for City Planning and Real Estate, the answer is simple. Since the city owns 70 percent of the land, there is a high degree of control as to the ways in which Helsinki can develop its land holdings. Combined with the fact that revenues derived from property taxes comprise less than eight percent of the city’s budget (versus roughly 40 percent for a typical Canadian municipality), it is financially viable for Helsinki to continue its longstanding policy of building non-segregated market and subsidized housing so that there is virtually no visible difference

between the aesthetics of market-oriented and subsidized units. Helsinki owns 43,000 rental units, 20,094 price- and quality-controlled (HITAS) units, and 2,480 right-of-occupancy apartments, providing housing for nearly 25 percent of the city’s 570,000 residents. To support its high-quality housing stock, the City’s own HITAS department was established over 30 years ago to project-manage housing developments built through the private sector, thereby monitoring developers’ construction costs and ensuring a high quality of housing. It is also a common practice for the City to hold design competitions before putting anything out to tender, encouraging continued innovation in housing design.

To help promote the latest area slated for redevelopment in Helsinki, Madonna will be giving a concert early in August in Jätkäsaari, a former 86-hectare cargo and dockyard facility that will be home to 15,000 people and 6,000 jobs by 2025. Pinned to the walls of the Helsinki City Planning Department, adjacent to the Jätkäsaari area master plan and facing an exceptionally beautiful Eliel Saarinen watercolour of a proposal for an early-20th-century precinct, is an enormous poster promoting Madonna’s upcoming Finnish concert date.

Along with Jätkäsaari, the city has already or continues to either shift or phase out its older industrial areas such as Kruunuvuorenranta to build new commercial and residential projects similar to the quality and type of housing recently built in other areas of Helsinki, such as Arabianranta (pictured above) or Viikki. “Our entire culture depends on what our homes are like,” noted Aalto. If we fail to demand high-quality housing for ourselves, then we’ll never get what we want. If the Finns need to draw inspiration from Aalto or Madonna, then so be it—one can’t argue with the success they’ve enjoyed in getting the housing they want and deserve.

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PROJECTS

Diamond and Schmitt Architects to design new concert hall for the Montreal Symphony Orchestra.

SNC-Lavalin recently announced a partnership agreement between the Government of Quebec and Groupe Immobilier Ovation (a limited partnership wholly owned by SNC-Lavalin) to design, build, finance, operate and maintain a new concert hall for the Montreal Symphony Orchestra (MSO). Located in downtown Montreal on the northeast corner of Place des Arts, the new 2,100-seat concert hall, to be known as L'Adresse Symphonique, will provide conductor Kent Nagano and the 120 musicians of the MSO with a permanent address for their full schedule of year-round musical performances. For decades, the MSO has been sharing space with other tenants in the adjacent 2,990-seat Salle Wilfrid-Pelletier, where acoustics for concert music were less than ideal, and where the scheduling of rehearsals, performances and educational programs was at times challenging. The architects chosen by SNC-Lavalin/Groupe Immobilier Ovation to lead the design of the MSO concert hall are Diamond and Schmitt Architects of Toronto in collaboration with the Montreal firm Ædifica. Diamond and Schmitt are internationally renowned as the award-winning architects of the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts in Toronto and are currently working in Denver on the Boettcher Concert Hall for the Colorado Symphony Orchestra. By creating an open, welcoming and engaging space on Place des Arts, L'Adresse Symphonique will enhance the public life of downtown Montreal. With its expansive, south-facing glass façade, the interior animated life of the lobby will be clearly visible to passersby thus fostering a new relationship between patrons and the city. The 200,000-square-foot hall is scheduled to open in 2011.

Levitt Goodman-led team to design Kitchener Public Library expansion.

Toronto architecture firm Levitt Goodman Architects in association with the Kitchener-based Walter Fedy Partnership and Phillip H. Carter Architect has received approval from Kitchener City Council for the renovation and expansion of the Kitchener Public Library (KPL) and the accompanying Civic District Parking Garage. The \$24.9-million library will include the complete renovation of the existing facility along with the design and construction of a 25,000-square-foot addition. The project also includes an \$18.5-million, three-level underground parking garage that will service the entire Civic District. The parking garage will alleviate



TOP DIAMOND AND SCHMITT ARCHITECTS OF TORONTO IN COLLABORATION WITH THE MONTREAL FIRM ÆDIFICA WILL BE DESIGNING THE NEW 2,100-SEAT CONCERT HALL FOR THE MONTREAL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA. THE BUILDING WILL BE LOCATED IN DOWNTOWN MONTREAL ON THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF PLACE DES ARTS. **ABOVE** TORONTO-BASED LEVITT GOODMAN ARCHITECTS IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE KITCHENER-BASED WALTER FEDY PARTNERSHIP AND PHILLIP H. CARTER ARCHITECT HAS RECEIVED APPROVAL FROM KITCHENER CITY COUNCIL FOR THE RENOVATION AND EXPANSION OF THE KITCHENER PUBLIC LIBRARY AND PARKING GARAGE.

the parking deficiency in the area and provide a platform for a future public square. The project will proceed under the direction of Janna Levitt, principal-in-charge, and David Warne, project architect, both of Levitt Goodman. The library will remain open during the construction period, which is expected to commence in 2010, with a projected completion date in 2013. Levitt Goodman has authored the past three feasibility studies for KPL and participated in the Civic District design charrettes. Other Levitt Goodman projects include the Waterloo Regional Children's Museum and the University of Waterloo School of Architecture. Phillip Carter has successfully

overseen over 50 libraries including renovations to over 25 Toronto Public Library branches. The Walter Fedy Partnership will provide expertise in parking garage design, LEED, mechanical, electrical and structural engineering, and has a history of local civic projects.

AWARDS

Toronto architectural firm RVTR wins Canada Council for the Arts Professional Prix de Rome.

The Canada Council for the Arts announced that Toronto architecture firm RVTR is the winner of



2009 AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE

Canadian Architect invites architects registered in Canada and architectural graduates to enter the magazine’s 2009 Awards of Excellence.

Eligibility

Projects must be in the design stage, scheduled for construction or under construction but not substantially complete by September 17, 2009. All projects must be commissioned by a client with the intention to build the submitted proposal. All building types and concisely presented urban design schemes are eligible.

Judging Criteria

Awards are given for architectural design excellence. Jurors will consider the scheme’s response to the client’s program, site, and geographic and social context. They will evaluate its physical organization, form, structure, materials and environmental features.

Presentation

1. Anonymity. The designer’s name must not appear on the submission except on the entry form. The project name and location should be identified.
2. Each entry must be securely fastened in a folder or binder of dimensions no greater than 14” X 17”; oversized panels will not be accepted. One (1) copy of this entry form must be enclosed within an envelope and affixed to the front of each folder, preferably without the use of Scotch tape or adhesives. Clips are ideal.
3. Each project folder must include:
 - a) first page—a brief description of the project (500 words or fewer)
 - b) second page—a brief description indicating the project’s ability to address some or all of the following issues (1,000 words or fewer):
 - i) context and/or urban design components
 - ii) integration of sustainable design
 - iii) innovation in addressing program and/or the client’s requirements
 - iv) technical considerations through building materials and/or systems
 - c) drawings/images including site plan, floor plans, sections, elevations and/or model views

4. Please do not submit any material in CD, DVD, or any other audio-visual format not confined to two dimensions, as it will not be considered.

Entry Fee

\$75.00 per entry (\$71.43 + \$3.57 GST). Please make cheques payable to *Canadian Architect*. GST registration #890939689RT0001.

Publication

Winners will be published in a special issue of *Canadian Architect* in December 2009. Winners grant *Canadian Architect* first publication rights for their winning submissions.

Awards

Framed certificates will be given to each winning architect team and client. Details to follow upon notification of winners.

Notification of Winners

Award winners will be notified after judging takes place in October 2009.

Deadline

Entries will be accepted after August 13, 2009. Send all entries to arrive by 5:00 pm on Thursday, September 17, 2009 to:

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the Professional Prix de Rome in Architecture for 2009. Valued at \$50,000, the prize allows the winners to travel to other parts of the world to hone their skills, develop their creative practice and strengthen their presence within an international architecture culture. RVTR was formed in 2007 as a collaborative architectural practice specifically structured to advance design research by directors Colin Ripley, Kathy Velikov, Geoffrey Thün and Paul Raff. This award will allow the directors to extend their design research on responsive northern housing and facilitate dissemination of their design work to an international audience. In the first year, they will study the methods used by mass-customized prefabrication industries in Japan. During 2010, they will investigate traditional and emerging technologies, buildings and communities for living in cold climates, particularly in Japan, Iceland, Scotland, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia, and facilitate dissemination of their design work to an international audience. RVTR was selected by a peer assessment committee appointed by the Canada Council, comprised of Manon Asselin (Montreal), Bernard Flaman (Regina), Valerie Gow (Toronto), Richard Kroeker (West Pennant, NS) and Darrin Morrison (West Vancouver).

www.canadacouncil.ca

2009 Ottawa Urban Design Awards.

The 2009 Ottawa Urban Design Awards celebrate projects built in the city of Ottawa that exhibit urban design excellence. The awards will honour exceptional projects built in the city between September 1, 2007 and September 1, 2009. This is the third in the biannual awards program. The winning submission in each of the categories will receive an Award of Excellence as the project that reflects good urban design principles and meets the judging criteria. Other entries in each category will be eligible to win an Award of Merit. The winning entries for the Awards of Excellence will be forwarded to compete nationally as part of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada's 2010 Urban Design Awards Program. Winning projects will: demonstrate design and architectural excellence; demonstrate clear urban design intent; contribute to the wider appreciation of urban design; demonstrate a positive contribution to the public realm/quality of place; contribute to the city's environmental and ecological health; connect to their locality; be important to pedestrian and liveability issues; be innovative and trend setting; and be open to transformation. The submission deadline is August 20, 2009.

www.ottawa.ca/urbandesignawards/

2009 Marcus Prize for Architecture goes to Alejandro Aravena of Santiago.

Alejandro Aravena, Executive Director of Elemental S.A., Santiago, Chile, has been chosen as the 2009 recipient of the Marcus Prize for Architecture, a \$100,000 prize funded by the Marcus Corporation Foundation and administered through the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee School of Architecture and Urban Planning to recognize emerging talent in architecture worldwide. The Marcus Prize provides a \$50,000 award to the winner and a further \$50,000 to the school to run the competition and to bring Aravena to Milwaukee to lead a design studio. During the spring 2010 semester, Aravena will make scheduled visits to the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee's School of Architecture and Urban Planning, focusing a graduate studio on specific challenges in architecture that inspire enduring benefits to Milwaukee's urban fabric. He will also be invited to participate in public workshops and lectures. Aravena's firm, a self-described "Do Tank," is affiliated with COPEC, a Chilean oil company and the Universidad Católica de Chile. The affiliation has a social/political agenda and considers architecture a source for building social equity. His work includes the Mathematics Faculty, the Medical Faculty, the Siamese Tower

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and the Architecture School for the Universidad Católica, dorm facilities for St. Edward's University in Austin, Texas, new children workshops and training facilities for Vitra in Weil am Rhein, Germany. In 2009, Aravena was appointed as a member of the Pritzker Prize Jury. On May 26, 2009, a five-person jury convened in Milwaukee to select among the 40 international nominees drawn from 18 countries, the largest-ever pool of nominees for the prize. The nominees are all practicing architects who were nominated by one or more of a select international committee of nominators. The Marcus Corporation Foundation is the philanthropic arm of the Marcus Corporation, a lodging and entertainment company headquartered in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The Marcus Prize is part of the Marcus family's ongoing commitment to support the growth and development of the practice of architecture in Milwaukee.

Broadway Tech Centre in Vancouver wins Green Roofs Award of Excellence.

The groundbreaking Broadway Tech Centre in Vancouver, owned by British Columbia Investment Management Corporation, (bcIMC), and developed by Bentall Limited Partnership, has won a 2009 Green Roofs Award of Excellence for Best Commercial Intensive Rooftop Garden.

These prestigious awards, which recognize excellence in innovative and integrated green roof design, were established in 2003 by Green Roofs for Healthy Cities, (GRHC), the not-for-profit North American association of green roof and wall experts and professionals. Designed by Bunting Coady Architects, with ecological and urban design by Sharp & Diamond Landscape Architecture Inc., the Broadway Tech Centre is a 17-acre urban business campus centered around eight separate buildings. Located on a former brownfield site, which once housed the Eaton's department store warehouse and distribution centre, the area now features multiple green roofs with native and hardy trees, shrubs, perennials and grasses. Constructed at a cost of \$4 million, the roofscape has an area of 270,000 square feet and provides a range of benefits for the Centre. These include improved stormwater management, reduced energy consumption, and purification of water and air. Many unique amenities have been incorporated into the roof structure, including North America's first infill sports field, café patios, south-facing entrance plazas and tree-lined walkways. A dedicated city street, known as Virtual Way, has been constructed over the underground parking. The thematic use of water features provides an ideal place for both active and passive recreation.

Drought-tolerant plants, native to coastal BC, including Pacific Dogwood, Vine Maple, Sword Fern, Salal, Oregon Grape, Evergreen Huckleberry, roses, grasses and wildflowers are featured. A state-of-the-art irrigation system was programmed to respond to the specific soil type, exposure and plant requirements of the roof area. This contributed to a 51% drop in water consumption. The Green Roofs Award of Excellence is the latest in a string of honours garnered by the Broadway Tech Centre. The facility has been recognized by the Urban Development Institute for excellence in Urban Development/Office Development, and by the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects.

COMPETITIONS

University of Calgary students recognized in international design competition.

University of Calgary Faculty of Environmental Design (EVDS) students Kris Kelly, Andrew Bramm and Anita Gunther, along with Professor Graham Livesey, were awarded a project citation in the 2008-2009 Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture (ACSA) Green Community Competition. ACSA received 260 project submissions representing 1,322 student participants and approximately 200 faculties from 76

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universities and 15 countries. According to Livesey, EVDS Professor and Associate Dean of Architecture, the Green Community Competition challenged students to rethink their communities focusing on the issues of sustainable development. "The students worked very hard in addressing one of the most significant challenges of contemporary cities: how to transform outmoded suburban communities into sustainable and liveable environments," said Livesey. The Green Community competition program encouraged students to explore sustainable planning strategies and develop a proposal to create a flourishing and sustainable community using the tools of the environmental design disciplines: architecture, landscape architecture, and urban planning.

The Self-Sufficient City: Envisioning the Habitat of the Future.

The aim of this competition is to promote online discussion and research through which to generate insights and visions, ideas and proposals that help us envisage what the city and the habitat of the 21st century will be like. Organized by the Institute for Advanced Architecture of Catalonia (IAAC) and HP, the competition is aimed at architects, planners, designers and artists. The competition prizes consist of two scholarships for the IAAC Masters in Ad-

vanced Architecture for the 2010/2011 academic year, cash prizes, and latest-generation large-format HP printers. Proposals may be submitted online until September 28, 2009. The names of the finalists and the overall winner will be announced in January 2010.

www.advancearchitecturecontest.org

Winners in the Berkeley Undergraduate Prize for Architectural Design Excellence announced.

Since its founding, the international Berkeley Prize Competition encourages undergraduate architecture students to write about issues central to the understanding of the social art of architecture and the social role of the architect in today's world. By asking students to grapple with such problems, the prize brings to the forefront of students' thinking the reality that architecture is a social art. The prize now comprises three separate and distinct competitions: the Essay Competition; the Travel Fellowship Competition; and the Architectural Design Fellowship Competition. This year's Essay Competition focused on the topic of Sustainable Architecture/Traditional Wisdom. Two first-place prizes of \$4,000 each were given to: Neelakshi Joshi, Birla Institute of Technology, MESRA, Ranchi, India for

"Banaras—A Continuing Natural, Cultural and Architectural Landscape" and Sharayah Jimenez, University of Arizona, USA for "Los Recuerdos del Barrio." Two second-place prizes of \$750 each were given to Hajir Alttahir, Manchester School of Architecture, UK for "sMesopotamian Peace Park" and Tyler Rozicki, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada for "Learning from Canada's Brick Masonry History." In the Travel Fellowship Competition, three awards of stipend and airfare were given to: Hajir Alttahir, Manchester School of Architecture, UK for travel to Article 25 Build, Maputo, Mozambique or Lesotho; Dominic Mathew, Birla Institute of Technology, Mesra, Ranchi, India for travel to the Auroville Earth Institute, Auroville, India; and Tyler Rozicki, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, for travel to the Rebuilding of the Cotswold Canals, Gloucestershire, UK. One award was given in the Architectural Design Fellowship Competition to Neelakshi Joshi, Birla Institute of Technology, MESRA, Ranchi, India to stage a local competition entitled "Translating Traditions—Looking Backwards, Moving Forward." This award consists of a \$2,500 honorarium plus \$3,500 allotted for the student prizes for the competition.

www.berkeleyprize.com

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ResilientCity.org International Design Ideas Competition.

ResilientCity.org is holding a design ideas competition to raise awareness in the architecture, planning and engineering communities of resiliency as a central strategy for dealing with the future impacts on our cities of peak oil and climate change. Participants may submit one or more design ideas for the four building design and urban design scenarios. Each scenario represents an important opportunity to imagine a more resilient, post-carbon urban design or building design strategy. Prizes include a first prize of \$1,000 CDN (any category); a building design second prize of \$500 CDN; an urban design second prize of \$500 CDN; and publication of winning and honourable mentions on the ResilientCity.org website. The submission deadline is August 31, 2009.

www.resilientcity.org

Design It: Shelter Competition.

The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and Google have announced the launch of Design It: Shelter Competition, a global online initiative that invites the public to use Google Earth and Google SketchUp to create and submit designs for virtual 3D shelters for a location of their choice anywhere on Earth. The deadline for

submissions is August 23, 2009. The competition is open to everyone from students to amateur designers to design and architecture professionals. After choosing a location on Google Earth, participants can use SketchUp 3D modeling software to create original designs for 100-square-foot structures in which to live and work. Completed designs are then uploaded to the Google 3D Warehouse and submitted via the Design It: Shelter Competition website where visitors will be able to browse through all of the entries. The competition takes its inspiration from *Learning By Doing*, an exhibition at the Guggenheim Museum's Sackler Center for Arts Education curated by David van der Leer, the museum's Assistant Curator of Architecture and Design, which features plans, photographs, and models of shelters built by students at the Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture. Following the contest submission period, these students will select 10 entries as finalists. The public will be invited to vote on the finalists online from September 7 through October 10 to determine the winner of the People's Prize. On October 21, the 50th anniversary of the Guggenheim Museum's opening, two competition winners will be announced and two prizes will be awarded—a Juried Prize and a People's Prize. Prizes will also include airfare and two nights' accommodation

for two in New York City, behind-the-scenes tours of the Guggenheim Museum and Google offices, and Google SketchUp Pro licenses. The Juried Prize will also include a \$1,000 cash award.

www.guggenheim.org/shelter

Mark Ashby Architecture and Green Skins Lab win Where's the Square? Design Competition.

The Vancouver Public Space Network announced the project team of Mark Ashby, Kevin Kong, Isabel Kunigk and Daniel Roehr as the final winners of the Where's the Square? design competition. The winning proposal was selected unanimously by the jury: urban planner Lance Berelowitz, landscape architect Jane Durante, architect Bill Pechet, photographer Derek Von Essen, Michael Vonn of the BC Civil Liberties Association, and Yosef Wosk, Director of Interdisciplinary Programs in Continuing Studies at Simon Fraser University. The proposal entitled "The Band" linked the Central Library, the CBC Building, BC Place Stadium and the proposed new Vancouver Art Gallery to the False Creek Seawall with a linear park. It stood out for its reconciliation of the "centre/edge" dichotomy that permeated the discourse on public space in Vancouver and for its clear communication of

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the design intent. The announcement of winners marks the culmination of a series of panel discussions and lectures developed by the Vancouver Public Space Network to foster dialogue on public space issues in Vancouver. The Where's The Square? design competition was open to professional and non-professional designers, and attracted over 50 submission from Vancouver and abroad.

<http://vancouverpublicspace.ca/index.php?page=120>

WHAT'S NEW

IIDEX/NeoCon Canada celebrates its 25th anniversary.

From September 23-26, 2009 at Toronto's Direct Energy Centre, this year's programming and events will not only celebrate 25 years of IIDEX/NeoCon Canada, but also the 75th anniversary of ARIDO, owners of the show. Also, newest show partner, the Green Building Festival, celebrates its 5th anniversary by co-locating with IIDEX. Four distinguished keynote speakers will offer insight and perspective to the audience. The business keynote is conversational capitalist Bertrand Cesvet of Sid Lee, and Enrique Peñalosa, urban visionary and former mayor of Bogotá, Columbia, will deliver the environment keynote. Light artist Stephen Knapp presents the lighting keynote, while the design keynote address will be given by design crusader Stephen Burks of Readymade Projects. The Green Building Festival celebrates its 5th anniversary with an international lineup of plenary and seminar presenters, an enlarged exposition of green products and networking events. Light Canada is a must-see expo featuring the latest in sustainable lighting solutions and technologies. Products on exhibit will include interior, exterior, commercial, institutional and decorative lighting, and a unique light painting installation by lighting keynote Stephen Knapp. THINK:Material makes its world premiere at IIDEX/NeoCon Canada 2009, and is an exhibition that brings together over 50 examples of the most innovative materials from around the globe. From finishes to building materials, architects and designers will have a hands-on opportunity to touch, feel and explore this extensive array of high-performance materials that have been adapted from other industries to the design world. The Green Patient Lab returns transformed by user feedback and with a new focus on technology. It's easy to envision the possibilities in improving health-care delivery by exploring the Green Patient Lab. A special Focus on Architecture section allows visitors to explore three special exhibitions on the show floor: *Twenty + Change* profiles emerging designers working in architecture, landscape and urban design from across Canada; an exhibition



ROBERT BARONET



ROBERT BARONET

ABOVE, LEFT TO RIGHT *SEEDLING* BY MATEO PINTO, CAROLINA CISNEROS AND VICTORIA MARSHALL CONSIDERS THE PINE SEEDLING AS IT EMERGES THROUGH THE PINE NEEDLE CARPET; *DYMAXION SLEEP* BY JANE HUTTON AND ADRIAN BLACKWELL IS A LANDSCAPE OF NETS SUSPENDED ABOVE AROMATIC PLANTS—ITS NAME REFERS TO THE FORM OF BUCKMINSTER FULLER'S DYMAXION WORLD MAP. THESE ARE TWO OF 22 NEW INSTALLATIONS AT THIS YEAR'S INTERNATIONAL GARDEN FESTIVAL.

featuring the winners of the Toronto Society of Architects' 4th annual poster competition focusing on green architecture; and finally, *Fringe Benefits: Cosmopolitan Dynamics of a Multicultural City*. For detailed information and to register free online until September 15, please visit the IIDEX/NeoCon website. After September 15, admission to the exhibit hall is \$25 online or on site.

www.iidexneocon.com

10th anniversary of Les Jardins de Métis/Reford Gardens International Garden Festival.

The International Garden Festival at Les Jardins de Métis/Reford Gardens is celebrating its 10th anniversary with an ambitious program of colourful gardens by leading international designers and a series of festive events presented through October in Montreal, Toronto and Grand-Métis, Quebec. Suspended gardens, a pyramid made of hay, subterranean gardens in a kaleidoscope of colours, a semi-transparent green cube and thousands of blue sticks are part of the festive gardens chosen for the 10th edition of the International Garden Festival. The six new gardens featured this year by teams of landscape architects, architects, designers and artists are: *Dymaxion Sleep* by Jane Hutton and Adrian Blackwell (Toronto); Deborah Nagan's (London, UK) 10-shed installation;

forest.SQUARE.sky. by Suresh Perera (Montreal); *Seedling* by Mateo Pinto, Carolina Cisneros and Victoria Marshall (New York); *Hayground* by Craig Verzone, Cristina Woods and Dragos Ivanet (Rougemont, Switzerland); and *HAHA!*—a collaboration between spmb_projects (Eduardo Aquino and Karen Shanski (São Paulo/Manitoba), Ralf Glor and Matt Baker (Winnipeg), and Martin Gagnon (Montreal). The International Garden Festival opened on June 27 and runs until October 4, 2009.

www.jardinsdemetis.com

Vancouver Art Gallery to launch new outdoor exhibition space.

The Vancouver Art Gallery will launch its new outdoor exhibition space, Offsite, with a site-specific installation by Chinese artist O Zhang from July 20 to November 29, 2009. Offering a rotating program of innovative public art projects by local and international contemporary artists, the new exhibition space in the downtown core allows artists to explore and respond to Vancouver's unique urban environment. Located at the foot of the Shangri-La Hotel in Vancouver near the intersection of Georgia and Thurlow streets, Offsite will present new projects organized by the Vancouver Art Gallery every six months, funded by the City of Vancouver through its public art program.

www.vanartgallery.bc.ca

EASTERN PROMISES



TENACITY AND PERSEVERANCE HAVE PAID OFF THROUGH A SERIES OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECTS CONSTRUCTED OVER THE PAST DECADE, DRAMATICALLY IMPROVING THE NORTH END OF HALIFAX.

PROJECT CREIGHTON/GERRISH AFFORDABLE HOUSING INITIATIVE, HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA
ARCHITECT SAVAGE STEWART ARCHITECTURE AND NIAL SAVAGE ARCHITECTURE
TEXT TERRANCE GALVIN
PHOTOS JAMES STEEVES

The story underlying the North End of Halifax can be found in many cities all across North America. Prior to the mid-1950s, the “Old North End” of Halifax, adjacent to the centre of town, was a real neighbourhood with banks, family-run general stores, drugstores, and two cinemas within blocks of the north-end spine, Gottingen Street. The area had a strong identity, a major shopping and entertainment street in Gottingen, and a vibrant mix of cultural groups populated the surrounding blocks. Everything wasn’t rosy and there were urban problems. Then along came urban renewal.¹ The City of Halifax commissioned a CMHC-funded report by Gordon Stephenson that concluded only the urban renewal process would save the North End.² The ensuing planning process, drawn up in Toronto, pushed out the general store along with many family-run businesses and families. From the late 1950s through the 1970s, Halifax’s North End population declined from over 20,000 people to under 10,000. Since then, countless well-intentioned groups have wanted to “save” the area, investing millions of dollars in community

projects that would revive, renew, or revitalize the now troubled neighbourhood. Despite the investment of the Neighbourhood Improvement Program (NIP) and several key public buildings, including the Halifax North Memorial Public Library and the YMCA, it should come as no surprise that once the lifelines were severed, the urban fabric continued to decline.

It is against the backdrop of this history—all too familiar to the followers of Jane Jacobs or Herbert Gans—that the Creighton/Gerrish Development Association (C/GDA) has created a remarkable and somewhat unique model that has contributed to urban infill, affordable housing, and neighbourhood stability. Their initiative has been driven by sheer will, a sound business plan, good design based upon the premise that “poor does not mean cheap,” and collaboration with every level of government in forming community-based partnerships.

How does one even address the question of designing affordable housing in Canadian cities considering that in 1993 the Federal Budget announced complete withdrawal of government



funding for new social housing? Enter Grant Wanzel, President and Director of the C/GDA and indefatigable housing activist during the past four decades.³ Two years following the government pulling the plug on national funding for social housing, in 1995 the C/GDA formed a community development group comprised of four non-profit organizations: the Affordable Housing Association of Nova Scotia (AHANS); Harbour City Homes (HCH), the former City of Halifax's non-profit housing society; the Metro Non-Profit Housing Association (MNPHA), which provides housing for low-income and hard-to-house single persons; and the Black Community Work Group (BCWG),⁴ an umbrella agency for many organizations active in Halifax's black community. While the four groups joined as one development association, individual groups within the C/GDA mobilized the community when necessary, and organizations including the MNPHA and HCH eventually became clients. No obstacle has been able to stop the relentless working methods of the C/DGA. Wanzel has repeatedly commented that the "all for one,

OPPOSITE COMPLETED IN 2004, "THE CREIGHTONS" FORMED THE SECOND PHASE OF THE CREIGHTON/GERRISH AFFORDABLE HOUSING INITIATIVE. **ABOVE** COMPLETED IN 2008, THE CUBIC MASSING AND MULTI-COLOURED FAÇADES OF HARBOUR CITY HOMES ARE APPROPRIATELY SCALED TO THE EXISTING NEIGHBOURHOOD FABRIC OF HALIFAX'S NORTH END.

one for all" attitude of the combined groups succeeded in assembling complementary skills, experience, and perseverance in maintaining local community relations and collaborating with all parties, including government.

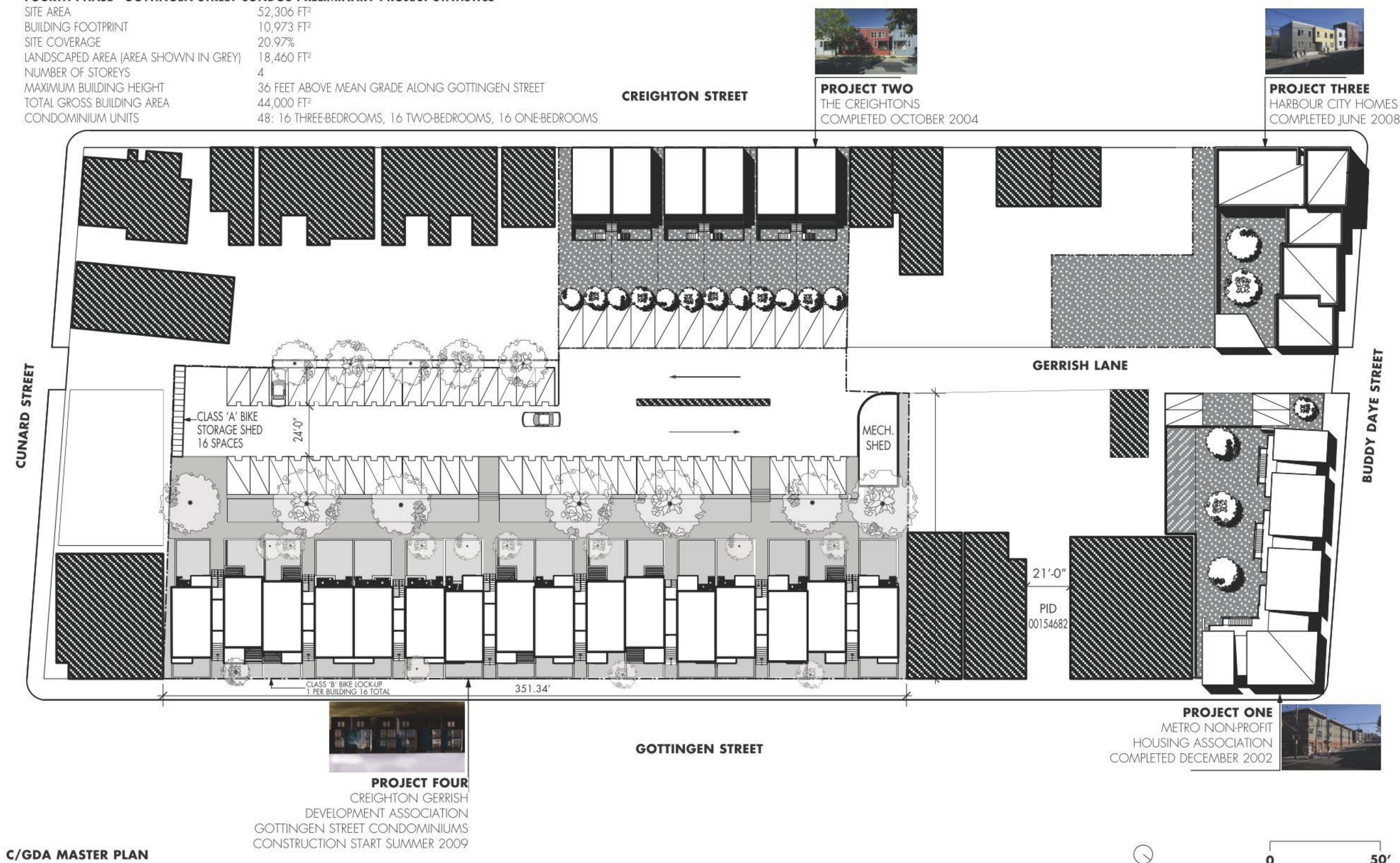
Beginning with their initial feasibility study in 1994, it must be emphasized that the C/GDA's experiment in urban infill has required countless committed citizens, consultants and professional groups. As a non-profit developer, the C/GDA's common goal was to redevelop the urban block bounded by Cunard, Gottingen, Gerrish (re-named Buddy Daye) and Creighton Streets. The block has an old bank on the southeast corner of Cunard and Gottingen Streets, several buildings along the west side of Gottingen Street, and several existing houses along the east side of Creighton Street. Their strategic approach was twofold: home ownership—to produce dwellings of high

quality that would be affordable to neighbourhood households;⁵ and affordability—integral to the first idea that the potential market was comprised of people who currently lived in the neighbourhood or would be anxious to return to the area. Whether renting or owning, the C/GDA's desire was to provide affordability through mixed types of tenure, inclusion in the neighbourhood and buy-in from various community groups, creating a mixed-income model.

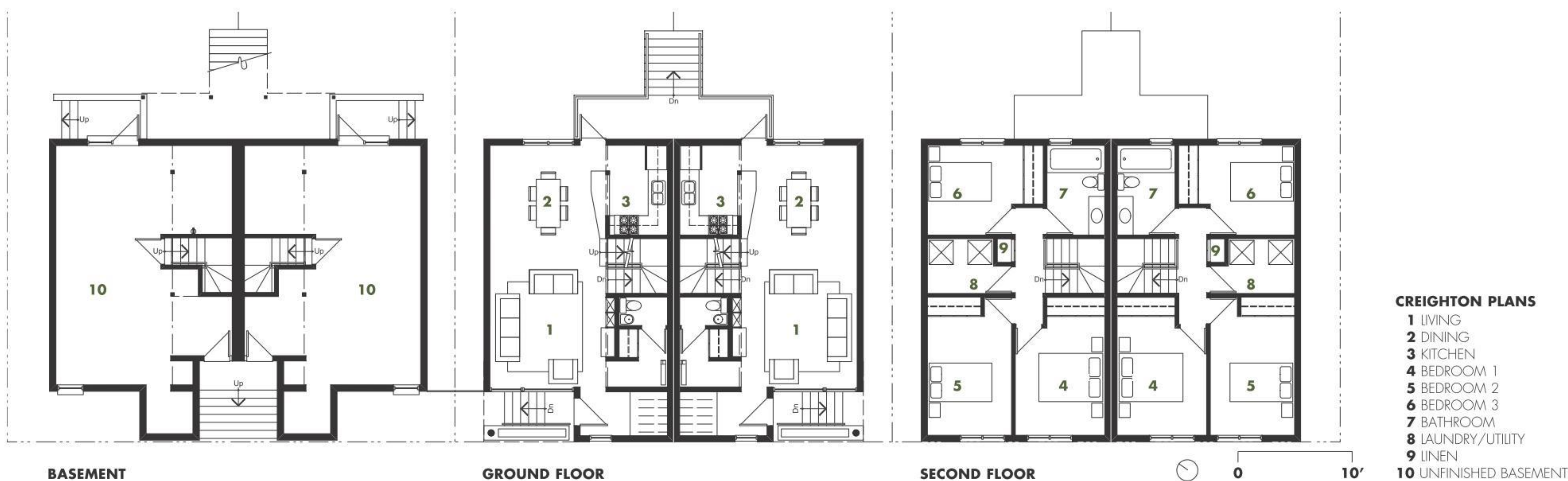
Before this could happen, several parcels of land had to be acquired in order to amass the roughly two-acre site within the urban block. Through a protracted and brilliant set of negotiations from 1994 through 2000, the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) was requested to deed two properties at \$1.00 each, which they did.⁶ The C/GDA argued that rather than have the City sit on vacant land, once the sites were fully

FOURTH PHASE—GOTTINGEN STREET CONDOS PRELIMINARY PROJECT STATISTICS

SITE AREA	52,306 FT ²
BUILDING FOOTPRINT	10,973 FT ²
SITE COVERAGE	20.97%
LANDSCAPED AREA (AREA SHOWN IN GREY)	18,460 FT ²
NUMBER OF STOREYS	4
MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT	36 FEET ABOVE MEAN GRADE ALONG GOTTINGEN STREET
TOTAL GROSS BUILDING AREA	44,000 FT ²
CONDOMINIUM UNITS	48: 16 THREE-BEDROOMS, 16 TWO-BEDROOMS, 16 ONE-BEDROOMS



C/GDA MASTER PLAN



occupied, the City would collect several times more property tax. As well, the Provincial Department of Housing and Municipal Affairs approved an interest-free loan to facilitate the purchase of 1.5 acres of land along Gottingen Street that was owned by the Sobeys Corporation.⁷ The site of the former grocery store, the first Sobeys in Halifax, was a key acquisition to complete the master-planning strategy of filling in the “missing teeth” of the block. Eventually, all three levels of government became involved in the project: the City in donating deeds and providing tax relief, the Province in providing the interest-free

loan, and finally, the CMHC’s Centre for Public Private Partnerships provided project development funding.

Once the C/GDA acquired the land, Savage Stewart Architecture was approached in 1999 to become the architects of a four-phase plan to redevelop the block. Niall Savage and the C/GDA were in agreement that the appropriate architectural strategy was to densify the block through infill, to anchor the corners of the block, to maintain a tight building edge to the street, and to continue the short Gerrish Lane through the block allowing interior access for parking and other

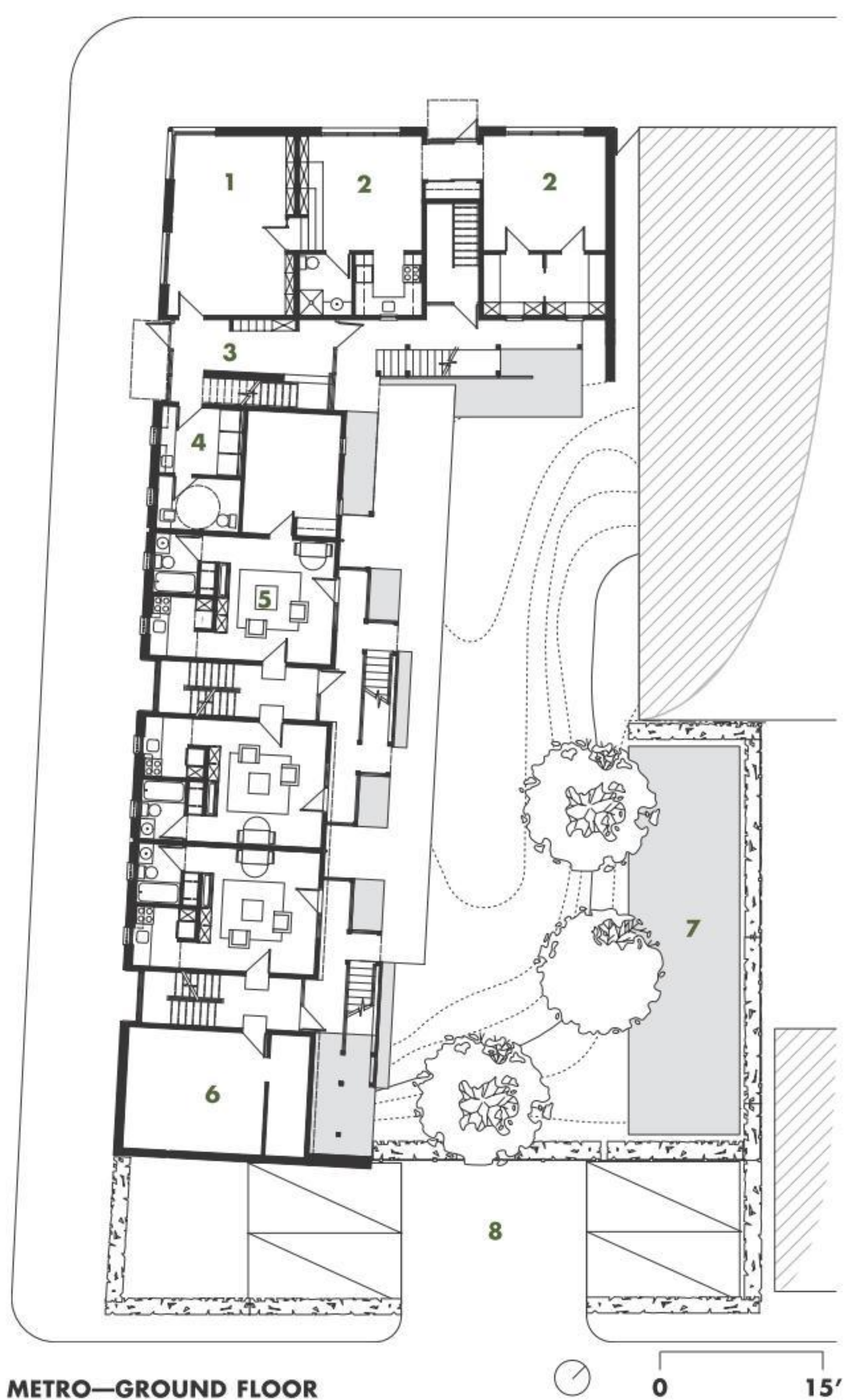
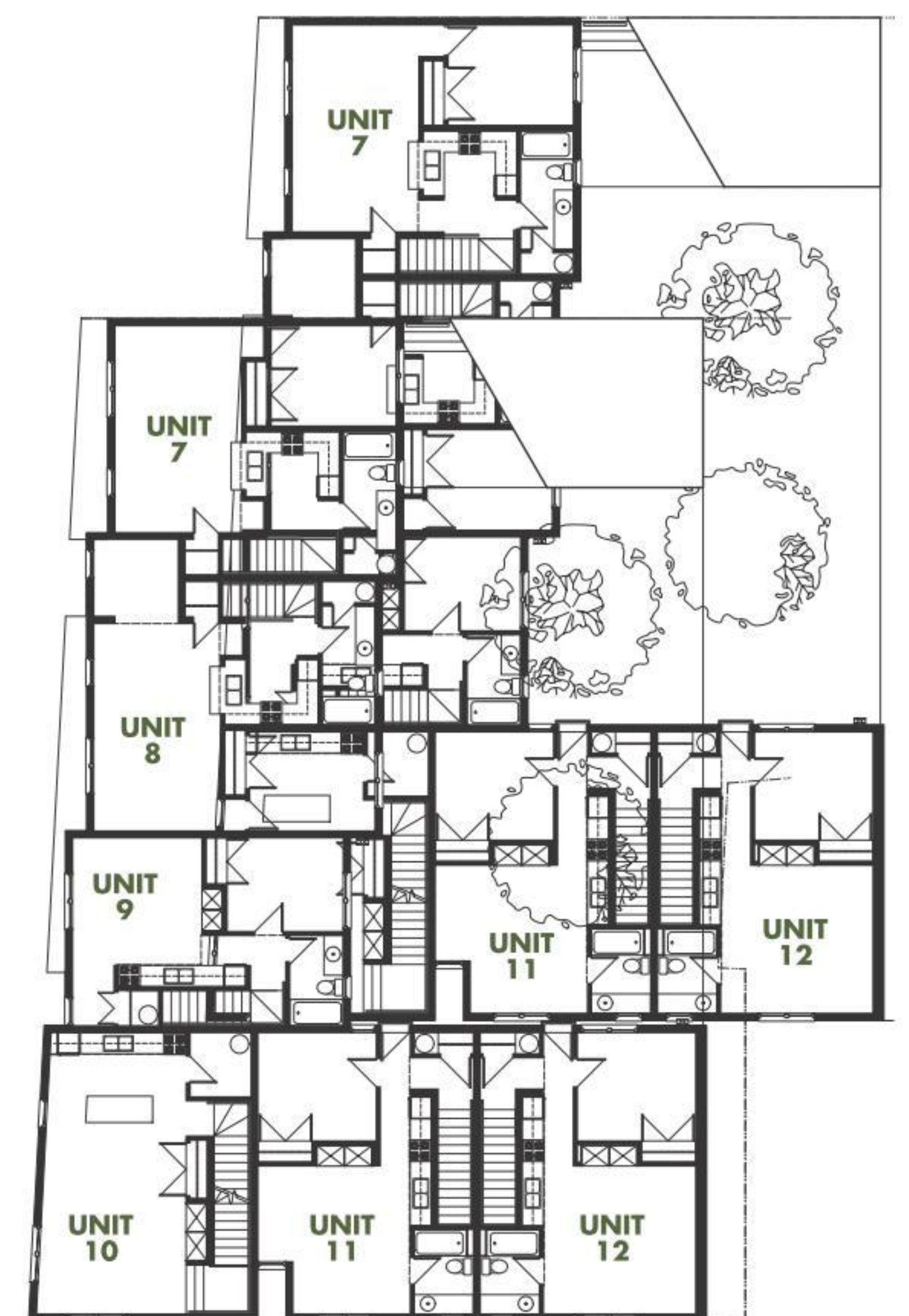
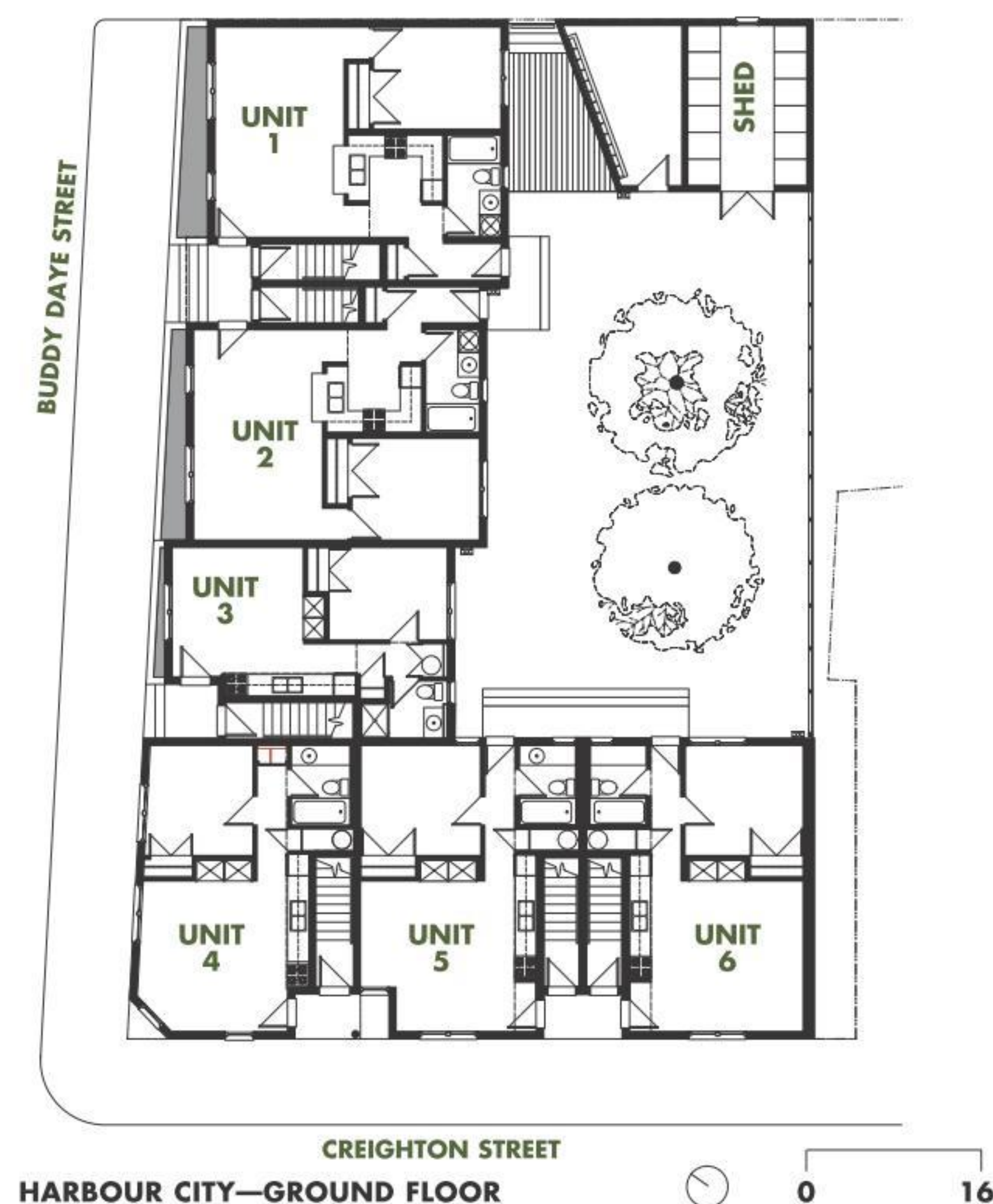
services. These principles are all incorporated in the master plan of the block, a key design document that has guided both the C/GDA and Savage through the various phases of development.

While the design has evolved and been recalibrated according to unforeseen demolition by the HRM and a subtle rethinking of the final phase of the program along Gottingen Street, the master plan has allowed the spirit of the overall vision to remain intact.⁸ In stabilizing and densifying one urban block, the final plan includes a total of 85 new housing units, built over a decade, according to a staged design process.

Metro Non-Profit Housing Association— Phase 1: 19 single units

In Phases 1 and 3, the C/GDA acted as the developer and then turn-keyed the buildings to its owner members. The Metro Non-Profit Housing Association (MNPHA) non-profit rental project for low-income singles was fully funded by the HRD “SCPI Program” and opened in February 2002.⁹ The building consists of 19 single bachelor units (290 square feet), including a live-in supervisor. Although the project is rent-geared-to-income, all apartments have a full bathroom, full kitchen and rear balcony, in addition to radiant-floor heating while a built-in Murphy bed acts as a central hearth. Security issues influenced Savage’s design strategy to place the major entrance on Gottingen Street with another entrance on Buddy Daye Street. Both doors lead into a central courtyard and then on to balconies and into the units. Although the apartments are intended to be economical, one of the tenets of the architect is that dwellings under 300 square feet don’t have to feel small if they are dual-aspect, allowing cross views and ventilation. This attitude is consistent through all four projects of the master plan. Good design can be tight and well-lit, demonstrating that poor economic conditions do not suggest cheaply made housing. For instance, residents requested a full-sized fridge rather than settle for the half-fridge that is typically associated with social housing.

In subtle ways, the new MNPHA building refers to the material palette of the old building, Club 55, which was demolished by the City in 1999. A brick plinth is topped by two storeys of pre-finished cedar siding with a custom profile and capped by a large expressive cornice that announces the building on both streets. The overall massing reads as five volumes: two on Gottingen Street and three as the building turns west around the corner. These volumes are interspersed with entrances and stairwells, united by the broken cornice. At ground level, the building houses a drop-in centre and a housing support centre, a medical examination space, a shower and a collective kitchen. The apartment building is also home to the Shining Lights Choir, who are organized and sponsored by the MNPHA. It was a proud moment for everyone involved that this innovative and affordable housing project was awarded the Lieutenant Governor’s Medal for Excellence in Architecture in 2002.



- 1 METRO NON-PROFIT HOUSING OFFICE
- 2 HOUSING SUPPORT DROP-IN CENTRE
- 3 SECURE ENTRY LOBBY
- 4 LAUNDRY
- 5 MANAGER
- 6 MECHANICAL
- 7 VEGETABLE GARDEN
- 8 PARKING



PROJECT METRO NON-PROFIT HOUSING, GOTTINGEN AND BUDDY DAYE STREETS
ARCHITECT SAVAGE STEWART ARCHITECTURE
CLIENT CGDA/METRO NON-PROFIT HOUSING ASSOCIATION
ARCHITECT TEAM NIAL SAVAGE, JENNIFER STEWART, AUDREY ARCHAMBAULT WITH GRANT WANZEL CONSULTING
STRUCTURAL CAMPBELL COMEAU ENGINEERING
CONTRACTOR RIDEAU CONSTRUCTION
AREA 10,000 FT²
BUDGET \$1 M
COMPLETION JANUARY 2002
PHOTOS KEN KAM, JAMES STEEVES

PROJECT THE CREIGHTONS, CREIGHTON STREET
ARCHITECT NIAL SAVAGE ARCHITECTURE
CLIENT CGDA/SIX PURCHASERS
ARCHITECT TEAM NIAL SAVAGE, JOHNEEN MANNING WITH GRANT WANZEL CONSULTING
STRUCTURAL CAMPBELL COMEAU ENGINEERING
CONTRACTOR BLACK DIAMOND BUILDERS
AREA 6,000 FT² + 2,500 FT² UNFINISHED BASEMENT
BUDGET \$750,000
COMPLETION SEPTEMBER 2004
PHOTOS JAMES STEEVES

PROJECT HARBOUR CITY, CREIGHTON AND BUDDY DAYE STREETS
ARCHITECT NIAL SAVAGE ARCHITECTURE
CLIENT CGDA/HARBOUR CITY HOMES
ARCHITECT TEAM NIAL SAVAGE, RAYLEEN HILL, EMANUEL JANINASH WITH GRANT WANZEL CONSULTING
STRUCTURAL CAMPBELL COMEAU ENGINEERING
CONTRACTOR BLACK DIAMOND BUILDERS
AREA 7,800 FT²
BUDGET \$750,000
COMPLETION JULY 2008
PHOTOS JAMES STEEVES

PROJECT GOTTINGEN TERRACE, GOTTINGEN STREET
ARCHITECT NIAL SAVAGE ARCHITECTURE
CLIENT CGDA
ARCHITECT TEAM NIAL SAVAGE, RAYLEEN HILL, TOM EVANS WITH GRANT WANZEL CONSULTING
STRUCTURAL CAMPBELL COMEAU ENGINEERING
CONTRACTOR BIRD RIDEAU
AREA 44,000 FT²
BUDGET \$5.5 M
COMPLETION JULY 2011

The Creightons—Phase 2: six “freehold” semi-detached houses

Interwoven within the fabric of the residential street to the west of Gottingen Street, the Creightons were subsidized through the federal/provincial Affordable Housing Program, which provided a Capital Reduction grant. The sod-turning ceremony for the six Creighton townhouses was in December of 2003 and they were all completed by October of 2004. These brightly coloured paired townhouses are built to the street edge, detailed with Hardie Board siding, and have a front stoop reminiscent of Halifax porches in the area. Situated on a deep 95-foot lot, each house occupies roughly 1,000 square feet over two storeys (outside dimensions are 20 x 31 feet). Each house has large front windows on the street, drawing light into the continuous living/dining space on the ground floor, further emphasizing the openness of the dual-aspect plan. Designed as three-bedroom townhouses, units may be reconfigured as two-bedroom units by removing a partition wall. All townhouses have an unfinished plumbed basement, with a separate entrance from the street as well as being connected by an internal stair to provide the possibility for a “granny flat” that could generate income. Alternatively, the basement level can also become a workshop or office. All houses have a deck and a rear yard, in addition to access to parking at the rear of the property.

Each house is a different colour—a characteristic prevalent in the neighbourhood—and individual owners express their identities through window coverings, outdoor planting, and finishing details both on the exterior and in the interior. In the spirit of Lucien Kroll and Aldo van Eyck, such variety within unity is a mark of good urbanism, making the row of semi-detached houses look as if they have always belonged on Creighton Street.

Harbour City Homes—Phase 3: 12 rental units

Completed in 2008 and managed by the C/GDA’s Harbour City Homes (HCH), this rental property was also funded through a Capital Reduction grant. The HCH building follows the footprint of the former Newman building that was unexpectedly demolished by the HRM in 2007. The C/GDA intended to renovate the earlier building as owner housing but instead ended up with an invoice from the City for the removal of the building. As a result, 12 new dual-aspect units each have different plans, and three units even have French balconies. The architect notes that the design of the stepping volumes is a variation on the Halifax side-hall house that takes into account the sloping site. The duplex apartments are arranged around four clusters of common entrances protected and well-lit at street level, once more taking advantage of building a tight street edge. In total, five colourful volumes of staggered Hardie Panel



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT THE CORNER OF CREIGHTON AND BUDDY DAYE STREETS, BEFORE THE NEIGHBOURHOOD TRANSFORMATION; A STREET VIEW ILLUSTRATES HOW THE CREIGHTONS OFFER MANY OPPORTUNITIES FOR ZERO-LOT-LINE DEVELOPMENT THAT REMAINS PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY; SIMPLE INTERIORS CHARACTERIZE THE METRO HOUSING DEVELOPMENT; THE BACKYARD OF THE HARBOUR CITY TOWNHOUSES OFFERS AN INTIMATE PLACE FOR CHILDREN TO PLAY.

siding set horizontally in galvalume flashing with vertical reveals step up to anchor the corner with a double-height apartment situated above a ground-floor unit at the intersection of Creighton and Buddy Daye Streets. The façade material is simply detailed and applied directly to the coloured façades of each volume. As in the first two projects, perhaps the massing could have included finer-scale detailing, not only to fit in with the residential character of the street, but to further play with light and surface texture. The building would have also benefited by lining the court with a set of internal surfaces (balconies, stairs, overhangs), akin to the courtyard life of the MNPHA building. Addressing the corner, the L-shaped courtyard typology provides a common and secure court that is completed by a collective storage and electrical shed to the rear off Gerrish Lane.

Gottingen Terrace—Phase 4: 48 condominiums

Not yet built, Gottingen Terrace is comprised of 16 brick-and-metal four-storey townhouses with a frontage of 350 feet on Gottingen Street. This

includes 16 two-bedroom units (560 to 615 square feet) on grade; 16 one-bedroom units (525 to 556 square feet) on the second floor, and 16 three-bedroom units (1,165 to 1,220 square feet) over two floors on the third and fourth levels. The design establishes a rhythm of eight paired four-storey terraced houses with common central stairs and side entrances. Entry porches and a variety of front balconies will animate Gottingen Street while brick screens will provide further relief to the large number of windows that enable all units to remain dual-aspect. All ground units have front and rear terraces, with landscaping, bicycle sheds and a play area in the rear, in addition to on-site parking accessible from Gerrish Lane. The creation of a laneway internal to the block takes parking off the street while the slope of the site assists in creating a series of continuous layers from the street to the inner block from both Gottingen and Creighton Streets. Urban design moves such as these also provide clues for the future development of the empty site behind the bank on Cunard Street. Although Gottingen Terrace is not taking advantage of any formal



programs for funding, offsets have been created by the C/GDA in assembling a variety of other sources of benefit that have allowed the condominiums to be priced well under market value.

Background buildings that promote strong urban principles while forming part of the urban fabric have always been the hallmark of good design. The four designs by Niall Savage do exactly that—they pick up on street edges, balcony rhythms, housing typologies, and courtyard spaces. Instead of the classic commercial/residential mix found in most mixed-use projects, the C/GDA has developed a model that provides mixed-income and mixed-tenure housing types through well-designed architecture, each project responding to a different urban condition and a different clientele. The resulting “quiet urbanism” of the overall master-planning strategy may go unnoticed as passersby walk along Gottingen or Creighton Streets. Although the Creighton/Gerrish Development Association’s incredible input and modest outcome causes this author to lament the great impoverishment brought about by homogeneous gentrification and myopic urban renewal in our North American cities, the lessons offered in the Creighton/Gerrish initiative underscore how much can be accomplished with a clear vision and an unswerving commitment to the process of housing. **CA**

ABOVE THE METRO TOWNHOUSES PROVIDE A SAFE PLACE TO LIVE FOR MANY LOW-INCOME AND DIFFICULT-TO-HOUSE TENANTS.

¹ One of the key studies on urban renewal in Halifax’s North End is the Master’s thesis of Bruktawit Melles, entitled “The Relationship Between Policy, Planning and Neighbourhood Change: The Case of the Gottingen Street Neighbourhood, 1950–2000,” Dalhousie University, 2003.

² The Gordon Stephenson Report was called “A Redevelopment Study of Halifax, Nova Scotia,” University of Toronto Press, 1957. Following urban renewal, a transitional agreement between the CMHC and the City of Halifax led to numerous smaller social housing projects.

³ A professor of housing theory at the Dalhousie School of Architecture, in the early 1980s Wanzel founded and presided over a non-profit housing resource group called the Neighbourhood Housing Association, which delivered several hundred non-profit housing units in Metropolitan Halifax. He is a Past-President of the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association and was the founder of the Affordable Housing Association of Nova Scotia.

⁴ The BCWG eventually folded and was replaced by the Black Business Initiative (BBI), the fourth member organization of the C/GDA.

⁵ As part of their needs assessment, the C/DGA researched that 87% of the people in the neighbourhood rented, and that 45% of this population lived in government-assisted housing. Therefore, C/DGA’s strategy was to increase the options of tenure, not to replace socially assisted housing.

⁶ The Club 55 property was the site for Phase 1 and the Newman property became the site for Phase 3.

⁷ Before Wanzel approached the Sobey Corporation, he got the City to agree that if the C/DGA acquired the Sobey’s land, the City would deed the other two parcels of land.

And when Sobey’s agreed to sell its property to the C/DGA, Wanzel convinced the Province to provide an interest-free loan for the purchase of the Sobey’s property—contingent upon the City deeding the other two properties.

⁸ In parallel, the C/GDA was involved in advocating their position to the HRM while the City developed the “Peninsula North Detailed Area Plan.” The HRM plan stipulates that all new commercial activity would be allowed south of the C/GDA block, while existing commercial properties within the block would be grandfathered in.

⁹ SCPI stands for Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative.

Terrance Galvin, MRAIC, is the Director of the Dalhousie School of Architecture. He is currently teaching a graduate-level course on the history and theory of cities and a design studio on urban housing.

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HOUSE RULES

A HALIFAX-BASED MULTIDISCIPLINARY DESIGN STUDIO APPLIES AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO A WIDE RANGE OF PROJECTS, FROM BRANDING TO ARCHITECTURE.

TEXT NOVA TAYONA
PHOTOS BREAKHOUSE

Steve Jobs, founder of Apple Computers, once said, “Design is the fundamental soul of a human-made creation that ends up expressing itself in successive outer layers of the product or service.”

Thanks to Apple’s most famous product, the iPod, we can now move through the day with our own personal soundtrack to accompany every moment. This kind of designed “experience” reaches more people than ever before, and can be attributed to the collaboration between business and design ideas. As a result, Apple’s competitors are now forced to rethink the look and feel of their own products. Perhaps more significantly, the iPod is an example of how the simple design of a media player has implications beyond itself, reaching into the social and cultural sphere, affecting how we interact and creating our individual and collective musical environment.

That design can have such an organic effect beyond its original intent is at the heart of cultural experience. At the city level, our everyday urban experience is a collection of moments—repetitive and fleeting—forming a representation of the world. Some of those moments are designed, while others are not. In the architectural profession, we are creators of spaces, places and things, and they all contribute to a layered expression of a larger whole. At the heart of it all, we ask: “What is that experience?”

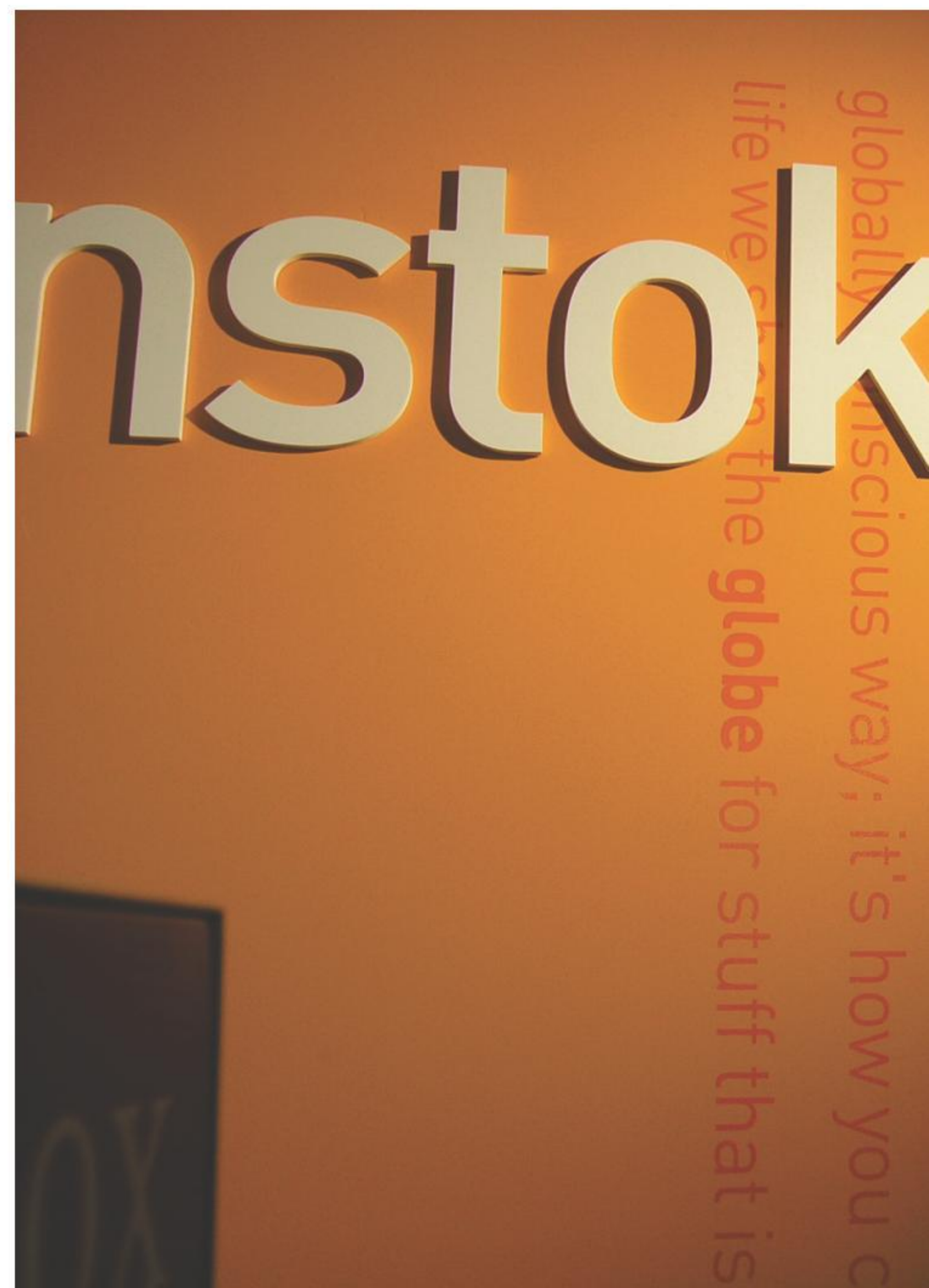
This question is always the starting point for Glen McMinn and Peter Wuensch, co-founders of Breakhouse, a multidisciplinary design studio based in Halifax. Their work in the areas of branding, interior design and small-scale architecture recognizes the need for design as a necessary, integral tool for successful environments, from large or small businesses to urban communities. In Halifax, their work is part of a growing public design consciousness that has picked up steam over the last several years. Breakhouse’s studio is diverse. Comprised of people within the complementary fields of architecture, fine arts, graphic arts, and interior and industrial design, these varying backgrounds lend themselves well to a design approach that considers the small details of a logo on a menu to be as important as the restaurant itself.

It’s the belief that “design makes everything better” that inspires McMinn and Wuensch, who met in 1995 while working in the Halifax film industry. McMinn’s studies in architecture at Dal-

housie University and Wuensch’s fine arts background from the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design are certainly complementary, but it was their work as production designers and art directors in film that sowed the seeds of their partnership. To create a scene for the camera is to add layers of visual meaning to the script, reinforcing an emotional intent behind spoken and written words. This is what good design should do. And this is what McMinn and Wuensch did when they also began helping friends who owned small Halifax businesses to develop logos, signage and interiors. At a certain point, one of their friends in the communications industry identified the pair as branders. The statement “design makes everything better” describes the very core of all that they do, whether it’s designing and branding built environments or organizing public design talks. “It’s not a smiling happy face kind of better,” says McMinn, “but more about finding a complementary design solution that matters, because at the end of the day, designers are problem-solvers.”

This way of thinking was a key point in their lecture at the Ivey School of Business at the University of Western Ontario last fall. As part of their speaking engagement, McMinn and Wuensch coordinated a workshop between business students and visual arts students, asking them to design solutions to improve campus life. Bringing two different types of students together with an understanding that design can make an environment better reflects Breakhouse’s desire to encourage public design awareness and discussion. “It’s imperative that designers and business people get together,” notes McMinn. “Both are creative and critical thinkers so the marriage is very natural and frankly, very important to the future of our planet.”

The interconnectedness between design and business finds fertile testing ground in projects like Carbonstok, a new store on the retail fringes of downtown Halifax that Breakhouse co-owns with Uncommon Group, a company specializing in retail development. A kind of pilot project, it demonstrates that a sustainable design philosophy can be profitable, while promoting consumer awareness in a retail environment. Products are all sustainably sourced and well designed. A sign in the store says, “Our daily choices affect the world we live in. Design that thinks forward can make a positive difference.” In creating this new



brand experience, Breakhouse designed everything from the interiors, graphics, packaging, website, millwork and business philosophy. Since opening last September, Carbonstok has seen solid sales in a part of the downtown that Haligonians typically associate with a popular blues bar and the train station.

Like Apple’s iPod, Breakhouse’s individual



branding endeavours have grown beyond the firm itself and extend outwards to the city of Halifax. Breakhouse's website reveals a list of well-known clients in Halifax and throughout the Maritimes. While their branding skills have undoubtedly contributed to a successful bid to design a new generation of Bell Canada stores, it's the small projects like Carbonstok that have

TOP LEFT IN 2003, BREAKHOUSE BEGAN COLLABORATING WITH THE FOUNDERS OF UNCOMMON GROUNDS TO CREATE A CHAIN OF COFFEE SHOPS WITH A SENSE OF HISTORY AND APPROACHABILITY. **TOP RIGHT** CAPITALIZING ON THE WORLDWIDE PECHA KUCHA PHENOMENON, BREAKHOUSE HAS CREATED POODLE CLUB—A RELAXED FORUM FOR DESIGN DISCUSSION THAT ALLOWS PEOPLE OF DIVERSE PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC BACKGROUNDS TO REGULARLY CONVENIE. **BOTTOM LEFT** THE CHALLENGE AT CARBONSTOK WAS TO CREATE A STORE USING COMPLETELY ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY MATERIALS. **BOTTOM RIGHT** THE EXTERIOR OF BREAKHOUSE'S STUDIO—AN INTRIGUING HYBRID OF RETAIL STORE AND DESIGN STUDIO.



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE INSIDE THE BREAKHOUSE OFFICES IN HALIFAX; BREAKHOUSE'S GLEN MCMINN LED A WORKSHOP OF NON-DESIGN STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO, TEACHING THEM THE VALUE OF DESIGN IN A BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT.

impacted not only the local businesses in Halifax, but the overall experience of the city.

Two examples come to mind: Fred and Jane. As I am a transplanted Haligonian who makes frequent visits back to my home city, these are not merely names to me but symbols of how thoughtful design and business can produce results that are obvious (i.e., financially successful) and unplanned (i.e., full of urban surprise). Whenever a new small business enters a neighbourhood, its survival is determined by how well it does financially, what kind of experience it adds to its surroundings, and if it appeals to those in the neighbourhood while also attracting people from beyond.

As a hair salon and café, Fred occupies the building of a former bank, and its signage and crisp interiors have brought modernity to a street that was once home to a number of pawnshops and antique stores. Located at an intersection just beyond the Angus L. MacDonald Bridge that spans Halifax Harbour, Fred is a fresh face amongst a colourful but at times rundown collection of old houses leading up from the bridge.

Similarly, Jane's on the Common occupies an edge condition in an area of Halifax better known for the city's public sports fields. Its conception began with first-time restaurant owner Jane Wright, who turned to Breakhouse to create a physical environment reflecting her menu of gourmet comfort food. What they delivered was a memorable visual experience which, combined with her delicious culinary creations, has created

a loyal following from neighbourhood locals and customers from across the city. According to Wuensch, Jane's on the Common was a pivotal project for Breakhouse, gaining them more visibility as a branding design studio because of its immediate success "in a place where you don't expect it."

My own parents' house is a three-minute walk around the corner from Jane's. It's a 10-minute walk across the flat green of the Commons to the shiny bustle of Spring Garden Road and the downtown. In my memory, the Halifax of my childhood had very clear urban boundaries divided along residential, recreational, commercial and institutional lines. It is still largely this way, but the Halifax of today is a sizeable regional municipality encompassing 380,000 people—including its outer reaches. I currently live and work in Toronto, but when I return home, each trip reveals surprises like Fred and Jane's. For me, these additions to the city symbolize a Halifax that is changing, stretching and reaching past its old boundaries in what could otherwise be perceived as unplanned moments that extend one's own memory's map of the city. In Toronto, there are many places that occupy similarly marginal areas as the spaces that are changing Halifax: a new coffee shop sprouting up amongst dusty antique stores; an opening in a colourful brick wall where handmade ice cream is sold only during the summer. When you discover these moments, it's a surprise. Suddenly, the city expands while becoming more intimate.

In addition to their branding endeavours, Breakhouse are active participants and hosts of design-related public discussions ranging from the formal to the informal. They have participated as members of the Halifax Regional Municipality Design Panel and have created Poodle Club, a branch of Breakhouse that provides Halifax with a relaxed forum for public discussion about community and design. This winter, Poodle Club hosted Halifax's first Pecha Kucha night, a popular event that has 150 chapters worldwide. It was founded by the Tokyo-based firm of western architects Klein Dytham Architecture as a means for sharing and cross-pollinating ideas, and has grown into an international series of informal talks about design and creative endeavours. Despite the fact that Halifax's first Pecha Kucha launched during a snowstorm, the event was packed. "We figured whoever would show up really wanted to be there," remembers McMinn. "It's an amazing low-tech way of being connected to the world—on our first night, Lima, Peru was also having its first night, while Tokyo was having its 50th."

What does design sound like, feel like, taste like, look like? In these uncertain times, it's easy to think of this question as a luxury that could easily be crossed off a business plan checklist, but a business can't survive without establishing a memorable visual identity—its brand experience. Companies that are trying to ride out the recession must rethink what it is they have to offer, and what makes them unique. With this in mind, Wuensch is particularly pleased with where the last 10-plus years have taken Breakhouse, and feels empowered each time they sit at the table with CEOs of large corporations.



“Because of our growing body of work in branding, we’re more confident and able to offer design advice that makes good business sense.” When we extend this notion to the urban form of the city, major capitals like London and Bogotá tell us that a city interested in the benefits of design—be it at the individual scale or the urban planning and infrastructure scale—is a multi-layered city that is economically viable and ultimately, liveable.

What has Breakhouse brought to the city of Halifax? As a multidisciplinary studio, they are, in a sense, like art directors, creating an experi-

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT THE INTERIOR OF JANE’S ON THE COMMON—A RESTAURANT OCCUPYING AN EDGE CONDITION IN AN UNEXPECTED PART OF THE CITY; A VIEW OF THE RESTAURANT IN ITS URBAN CONTEXT; THE EXTERIOR STOREFRONT OF CARBONSTOK; A PROTOTYPE CONCEPT FOR THE NEW BELL TELEPHONE KIOSK; A TABLETOP MOCK-UP OF THE NEXT GENERATION OF BELL CANADA RETAIL STORES.

ence within a framework of business environments—possibly a hair salon, a restaurant, or a retail store. These designed mini-worlds have a place within the larger experience of the city of Halifax. The design of each element from small to large, from logos and menus to interior and exterior spaces, have an expanding effect that reaches

beyond each individual project. As Wuensch says, they are not making big moves, but perhaps are helping to effect change “1,000 to 2,000 square feet at a time.” **CA**

Nova Tayona is an intern architect working at Ian MacDonald Architect Inc. in Toronto.

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A CHANGED CONTEXT

IN A WORLD WHERE CITIES ARE GROWING FASTER THAN EVER AND TRANSNATIONAL MIGRATION IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY PREVALENT, THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNER IS CHANGING.

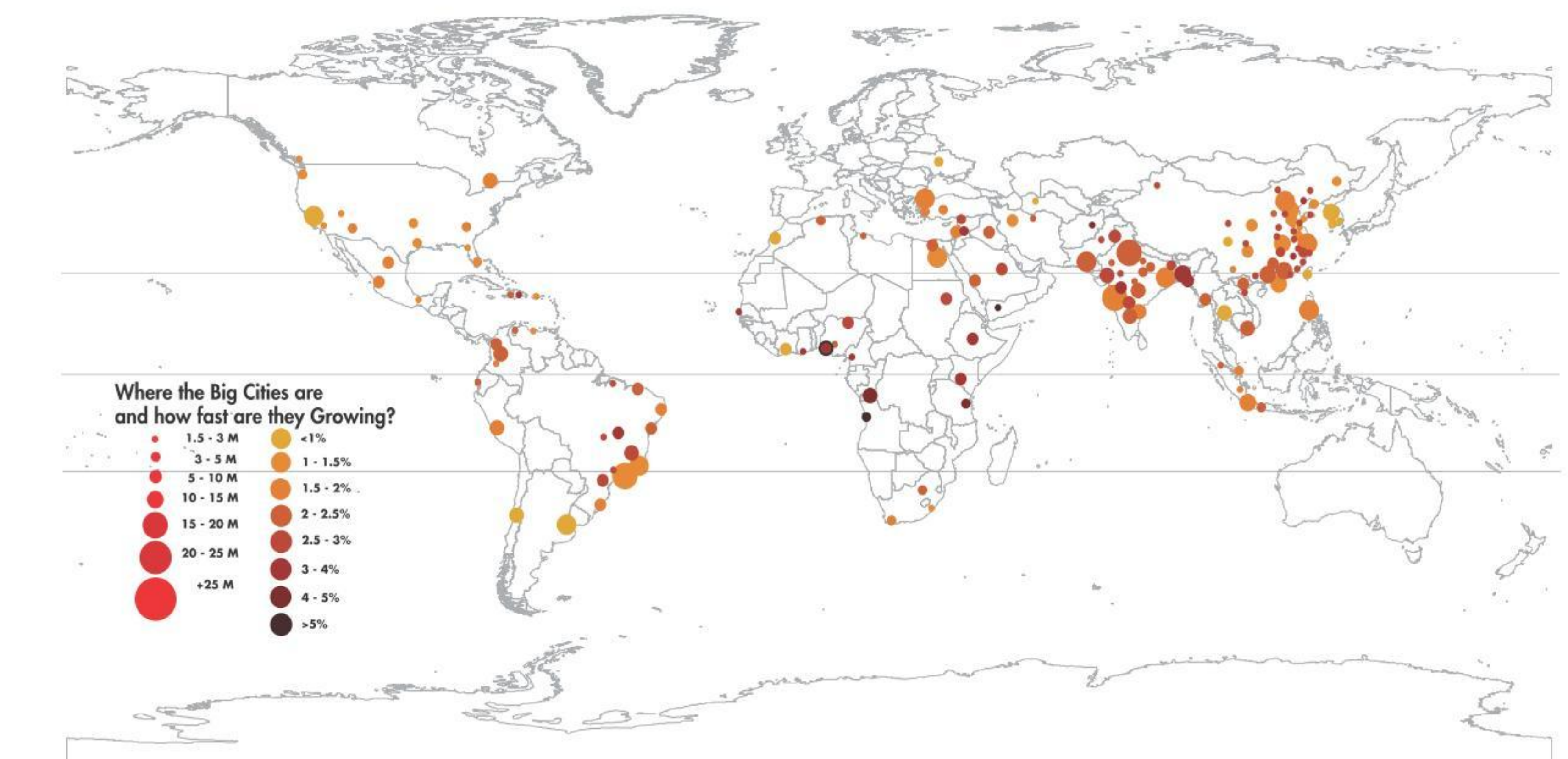
TEXT SHELAGH MCCARTNEY

In the period since World War II, the phenomenon of global migration has caused widespread and unplanned urbanization that has gradually transformed our planet into a seemingly incontrovertible urban order. A new paradigm of city-making is occurring.

Similar to other periods in history, the globalizing city has made new demands on the designer to address the tensions of our changing global context. In the past, architects have responded later than those in the social sciences—they have been slow to incorporate global issues into their building practices. In the continuously globalizing world, there is a need for designers to make propositions rather than merely react to the past to utilize their imaginations and multi-tasking abilities.

The fundamental difference in the growth trends of cities of the past is that they were based upon industrialization within their own countries, rather than through current global forces. People have built and then intensified the edges of cities for centuries, eventually forming communities that have matured to become valuable parts of the city. What has changed in recent times is the scale of these areas due to continuing urban migration. With one of every two urban dwellers predicted to be living in slum conditions by 2025, more than 1.5 billion people will have no other option available to them other than finding housing through informal urbanization—settlements built and existing outside of official urban development regimes.

This continuous process has transformed the idea of what defines a city, challenging the notions of urban planning and redevelopment best practices. The urban fringe is no longer an insignificant site occupied by a minority, but a strategic region where important aspects of the future development of a city will occur. While these informal and often creative mechanisms have provided the primary solutions for housing at the level of the resident, the modalities of informal settlements have wasted land and services, the societal costs of which are significant. The physical design of our homes, neighbourhoods and communities shapes every aspect of our



ABOVE THIS MAP ILLUSTRATES THE LOCATION OF THE WORLD'S MOST POPULOUS CITIES. THE DARKER THE COLOUR, THE FASTER THEIR POPULATIONS ARE GROWING.

lives, and yet architects are often desperately needed in the places where they can least be afforded.

Social Activism

The origins of social or humanitarian design can be traced as far back as the late 1800s when social reformers began to turn their attention to housing conditions of the poor in reaction to the squalid conditions of working-class neighbourhoods in many cities transformed by the Industrial Revolution. Photographers such as Jacob Riis and Thomas Annan famously documented the slum conditions, prompting a reform movement that inextricably linked health, welfare and productivity to adequate and healthy housing. As an antidote to the ills of the city, social reformers also adopted the concept of town planning, and when combined with Modernism, had a profound influence on the construction of low-income housing projects in the following decades.

Following World War II, architectural culture emerged with a renewed social consciousness and a formal vocabulary inherited from early 20th-century Modernism, and began to evolve as a global force. Modernism created the desire for equal rights, conditions, benefits, and outcomes for common workers within these increasingly industrialized societies. Today, most societies have subscribed to the modern ideologies of democracy, human rights, liberty and equality—widespread standards expected from governments by most citizens. Modernism affirmed the power of human beings to create, improve, and reshape their environment with the aid of scientific knowledge, technology and practical experimentation. It encouraged the re-examination of every aspect of society—from commerce to phil-

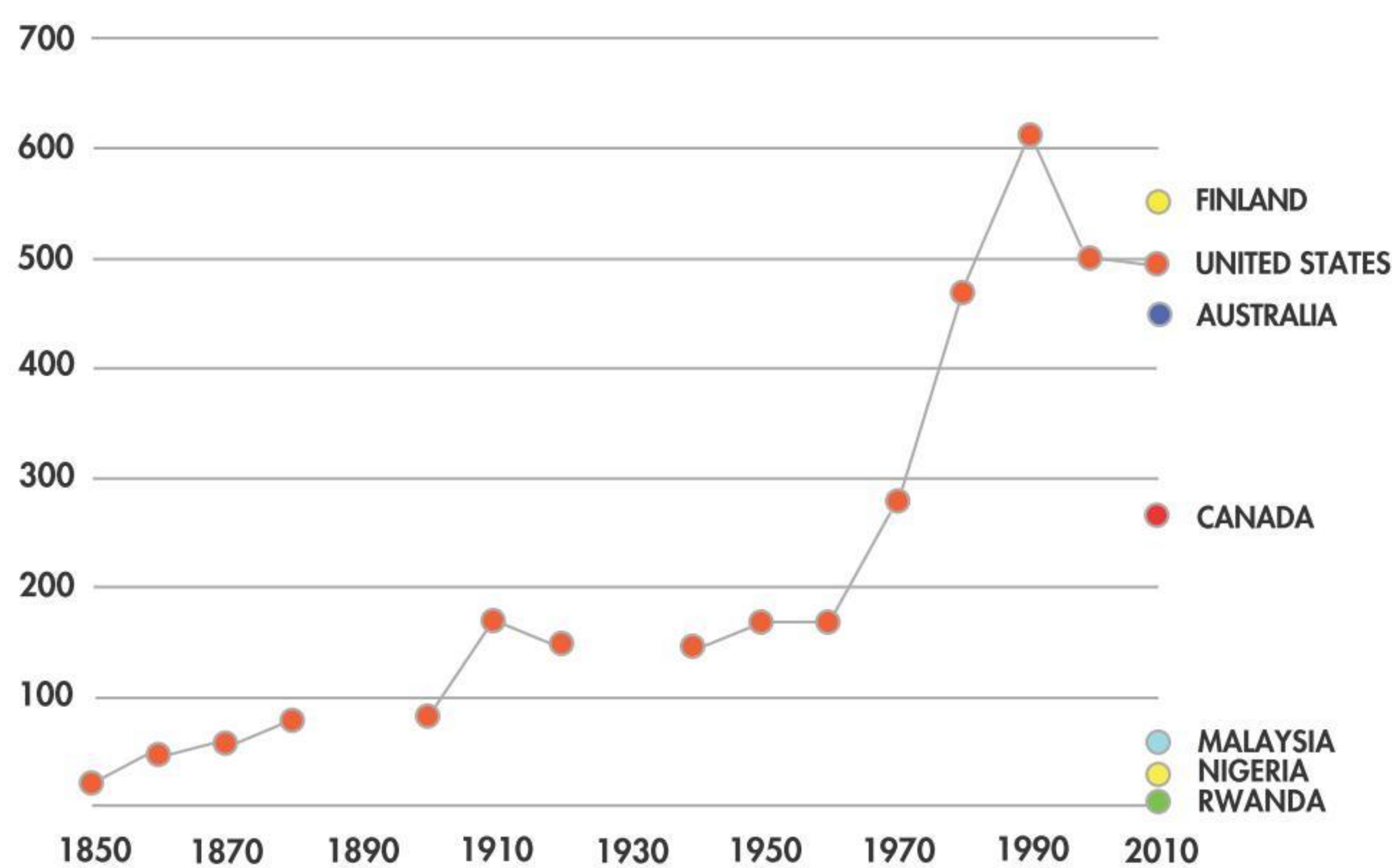
osophy—with the goal of finding that which was “holding back” progress, and replacing it with new, progressive—and therefore better—ways of reaching the same end.

Need for Designers

The greatest humanitarian challenge we face today is that of providing shelter. Many of the world's rapidly growing cities are located in areas which gained sovereignty or had a great shift in their political systems after World War II. These cities were previously dominated by colonial rule, where agents of imperial power controlled the systems and implementation of formal building and city design. In the rapid development of cities today, international systems and standards are being used and are needed to ensure general safety in dense multi-storey development. The current number of architects in these cities is very low. In Rwanda, the number of architects per million capita is 0.6, 15.6 in Nigeria, and 59.2 in Malaysia. In contrast, most developed nations have between 230 and 550 architects per million capita. Clearly, there is a need for more architects in rapidly expanding cities in order to keep pace with the demand for growth.

Evolution

Designers have progressed from working as agents to being global actors, particularly in countries of “The Rest”—or the so-called third world. Working as experts, first as technocrats and then as advisors, designers achieved power, either by design or through their best efforts. Their opinions were held in high regard and had the ability to influence policies and practices as well as attract investment. The expert is supposed to be a credible professional with no political or local conflict of interest, but the selection of the



Number of Architects per Million Capita

ABOVE SINCE 1850, THE RATIO OF ARCHITECTS TO THE GENERAL POPULATION HAS GENERALLY IMPROVED. HOWEVER, WHEN SAMPLING A FEW COUNTRIES, CANADA'S RANKING REMAINS SIGNIFICANTLY LOWER THAN THAT OF THE UNITED STATES OR NORDIC COUNTRIES LIKE FINLAND.

policy to be undertaken and who will construct the building is political. Designers need to be aware of this conflict and must educate themselves on these issues.

The Modern experiment utilized social housing as a locus for architectural theory. From Team X onward, architects approached the city with the intent to liberate the individual and to design spaces and buildings that encouraged new forms of social interaction and housing. Critics of these interventions question the responsibility of experimenting with the world's poor. Today, architects experiment with construction techniques and typological models in areas of "The Rest" rather than the established and connected West, where failure would be catastrophic to reputations.

Urban Renewal

Designers embarked on ambitious housing plans with the strength of Modernism. Developed and developing countries alike launched new urban renewal programs which initiated slum clearance programs based upon housing acts in the 1930s. One of Modernism's strongest tenets of architecture, urban design and planning was its disdain for housing conditions within the slums and the belief that the slums had to be replaced with new, modern housing. The Modernist notion held that new physical structures would yield patterns of socialization which would lead to poverty alleviation.

The housing policy debate became polarized between the extremes of slum clearance and slum upgrading. Slum clearance was expected to help eliminate substandard housing stock, and former slum-dwellers were to be provided with new public housing. However, typically in both rich and poor countries, redevelopment projects led to a loss in the total number of housing units, and large sectors of communities and thus the cultures of those specific communities were destroyed.

By the 1960s, Modernist housing strategies were being strongly criticized by designers for exacerbating the housing shortage for their flawed belief in physical determinism and their assumptions about the physical preferences of beneficiaries. The most influential critic of the intended slum clearance housing policies was architect John Turner, who claimed that government-provided medium-rise housing was unsuitable for low-income groups and that extreme policies were not required as housing conditions in squatter settlements would improve over time. Turner convinced governments that

they should cease what they do badly, and allow the primary actors of the private sector to provide and manage housing. Many governments restricted their policies of slum clearance and reduced their programs to develop more public housing despite the continuing need for additional housing. This "self-help" school addresses housing as a social necessity, and when left to their own devices, people will build dwellings corresponding to their economic capacity, social circumstances, and cultural habits. State support and planning mechanisms were needed for elements that people could not provide for themselves, such as basic infrastructure, certain building materials, and financial resources.

Housing Policy

As the political climate of the world changed in the 1970s, the concept of self-help gained momentum due to the triumph of democracy and the free-market thesis. The poor were no longer seen as a burden but as a resource. Designers continued to influence through basic self-help housing projects and concepts. Some examples are Charles Abrams' and Otto Koenigsberger's "core" model as part of a United Nations mission to Ghana, and Millard Fuller's creation of Habitat for Humanity, which worked on a partnership basis between volunteers and homeowners, which had the advantage of speeding up the construction process and lessening the burden on struggling families because they were not doing it alone.

Although designers participated or played major roles to mobilize self-help housing programs, the very concept negated the traditional role of the architect. Design was not perceived as adding value, and architects acted as trainers and enablers. Once again, the role of designers in "The Rest" was called into question. It would require a whole new generation of architects, urban designers, policy-makers, planners, humanitarian aid workers, and others to bridge the gap between design and policy. In doing so, not only would they reaffirm the essential role of design but demonstrate the ability to build sustainable communities.

Today, evidence of this disconnect of policy and design being resolved is evident. For example, Chilean architectural firm Elemental is using design to influence policy, as winners of a design competition to provide a model of social housing. The competition was organized by the Chilean Ministry of Housing, who asked Elemental to rewrite the housing policy to enable better design which hybridizes the self-built and governmental provision housing models. The design enabled the building of an initial 36-square-metre house that contained essential services while allowing for additional self-built construction to expand the house to 70 square metres.

"Bottom-Up" Planning

A movement toward greater community engagement took place as designers were influenced by the failures of many of the large-scale public building projects of the 1960s. In "The Rest," participatory, bottom-up or mutual-help planning relied on the poor urban dwellers' potential to manage their own development using their own local resources, complemented by external technical and financial support. Many architects worked to bridge the gap between providing basic shelter and building sustainable communities. In 1983, architect Balkrishna laid the foundations for what would become a vibrant mixed-income community in Indore, India, by combining the best of the site-services model with a more heightened design sense. The project was designed with community engagement by using the cluster home model to encourage inhabitants to expand their homes progressively over time, which allowed the community to embellish the houses according to individual taste. Other community participation projects led by architects followed.

In all projects and especially projects where experts are involved and the community engaged, ethical issues of probability and possibility are introduced. Today, design-specific NGOs are evolving to address this issue. For

example, each year, Design Corps—in association with a local non-profit organization or school—hosts its Structures for Inclusion (SFI) conference, which uniquely exposes attendees to both pathways and the of impact of alternative community-based work. Architecture for Humanity’s founder Cameron Sinclair brings the message of architecture and design solutions to humanitarian crises to popular culture, and harnesses the power of professional design to build safer, more sustainable and highly innovative structures that become assets in their communities.

“When a new, planned building rises in the slum—be it a public toilet or a sewing cooperative—it immediately becomes a monument. It was conceived by an architect, it indicates things are changing. People understand they now have the right to what was only available in the so-called formal city.” (Jorge Mario Jáuregui, architect)

Where do we go from here? The chief concern is that architects continue to make positive changes in the cities of “The Rest,” and the sensibilities of global actors and the globalizing world are shifting. The architect of the 21st century will require skills to not only design functional cities to meet the needs of individuals and communities, but

Governments Led by Architects Addressing Needs

In Curitiba, Brazil, the city’s master plan and “Bus Rapid Transit” system actively connects areas of informal urbanization to help residents obtain the benefits of growth, including access to jobs, recreation and other elements of urban community. Under the guidance of mayor and architect Jaime Lerner, Curitiba responded to bloating growth with an integrated approach by introducing the first pedestrian street in Brazil in 1971, and thus prioritized the pedestrian over the automobile. The Bus Rapid Transit system cost less and was implemented faster than a subway system, and a change to the city plan prevented construction of buildings in the centre to a system where buildings are constructed along the linear connections to the dense outlying communities. By 1992, almost 40 percent of Curitiba’s population resided within three blocks of major transit arteries. This clear integrated transportation plan reduced ambiguity for developers, discouraged false speculation on undeveloped lands, and provided clear structural corridors for growth to determine settlement patterns rather than mobility needs arriving after settlement.



also to delicately balance the competing priorities of economics, aesthetics and ethics while meeting policies and regulations in an ever-shrinking world. Are architects prepared for the breadth of their new roles as global actors? **CA**

Shelagh McCartney is an architect and urbanist who is currently a doctoral candidate at the Harvard University Graduate School of Design, studying informal settlements in rapidly expanding urban agglomerations.

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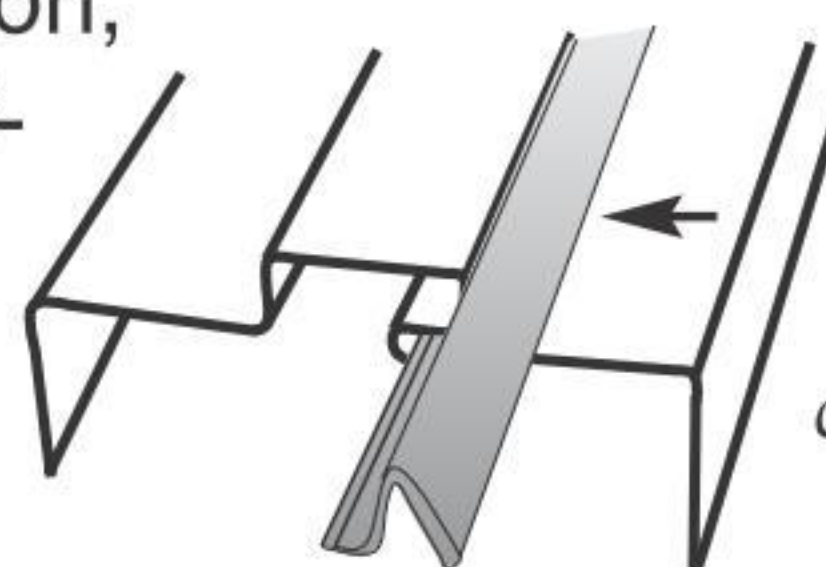
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Best Art Direction of a Complete Issue,
January 2008



Silver

Best Art Direction of an Opening Spread or
Complete Feature November 2008



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Canadian Architect gratefully acknowledges the support and enthusiasm of its readers and contributors who help us deliver high-quality content on a monthly basis.

HISTORY OF CANADIAN ARCHITECT

In continuous publication since 1955, Canadian Architect is a monthly magazine for architects practicing in Canada. Our magazine documents significant architecture and design from across the country, and features articles on current practice, building technology, and social issues affecting architecture.

OVERVIEW OF THE CBP

The Canadian Business Press is a not-for-profit association representing the interests of Canadian business and professional publications since 1981. The CBP works to foster better communication among members of the business publishing industry in Canada and utilize the unique talents of its committee members to promote the success and visibility of the business press in Canada.



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Timely Introduces New Kerf Steel Door Frame

Timely has added a new fixed throat kerf frame to its line of prefinished steel door frames. This latest offering is an entry door frame that features a high performance, factory-installed door seal which reduces light, sound and smoke transmission. Most importantly, the new frame reduces costs and field installation time and prevents job-site installation problems. Timely Prefinished Steel Door Frames. Contact: 818-492-3500. www.timelyframes.com/cam



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The HPNC Program

The High Performance New Construction (HPNC) Program offers financial incentives to building owners and their design decision-makers (architect, consulting engineer, etc.) for the design and construction of energy-efficient buildings. Offered by the Ontario Power Authority and delivered by Enbridge Gas Distribution, this program provides incentives to help you design it right, build it better and reap the rewards.

For more information call 1-888-OPA-HPNC or visit www.hpnc.ca.



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AccuPly Fascia and Soffit System

Flynn Canada's new AccuPly composite fascia and soffit panel system is a cost-effective approach to new and retrofit construction. It incorporates aluminum composite wall panels and an extrusion grid system that is economical and easy to install. It is an ideal alternative to more expensive "structural" panel systems. AccuPly can be incorporated as an exterior or interior modular wall cladding for new construction and/or any retrofit applications.

Building for the Economy

June 27-September 7, 2009 This new exhibition at Toronto's Architecture at Harbourfront Centre Gallery includes participating firms AGA-THOM Co., Breathe Architects and Lapointe Architects, who will present three new installations that explore building and design practices in the face of global economic realities.
www.harbourfrontcentre.com

Quebec in Design

June 30-October 4, 2009 This exhibition at the Design Exchange in Toronto presents 75 years of work from the collection of the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec, and provides an overview of the history of design in Quebec, from the interior decorators of the 1930s and the entrenchment of design in the aftermath of World War II to the period of effervescence surrounding Expo '67 in Montreal. The exhibition also examines the contemporary period in design, sequenced to enable exploration of design landscapes from

the late 1970s to the present. Original objects, documents and photographs will be presented as well as sound and film clips documenting the ephemeral work.
www.dx.org

AIBC walking tours

July 2-August 29, 2009 The Architectural Institute of British Columbia (AIBC) offers six architectural perspectives of Vancouver and Victoria through its summer walking tours. The tours offered in Vancouver are: Victory Square & Gastown—Where the City Began; Chinatown—Yesterday & Today; Strathcona—Neighbourhood of Change; Yaletown & False Creek North—Industrial to Residential; The West End—The Manhattan to Mole Hill; and The Downtown Business Core—Modern & Contemporary. Victoria tours include: The Inner Harbour; The Site of Fort Victoria; Old Town & Chinatown; Ecclesiastical Architecture; Art Deco & Moderne in Victoria; and finally, James Bay.
www.aibc.ca

Heritage Toronto walking tours

July 4-October 4, 2009 Celebrating Toronto's 175th birthday, free historic neighbourhood walking tours continue through the summer and explore the city's cultural, natural and architectural history. New walks include: Fringe Festival Sites, Union Station and the Railway Lands, Mackenzie's 1834 Toronto, Agincourt Village, The Leafy Side of the Beach, Imagining Toronto's Past, Atop the Davenport Hill in the 1920s, and The Humber: Celebrating 10 Years as a Heritage River. The tours are researched, designed and led by local historians, groups and professionals from across the city. Walks are free and no reservations are required.
www.heritagetoronto.org

Executive Education Open Enrollment Programs

July 9-August 7, 2009 Harvard University Graduate School of Design Summer Executive Education Programs explore timely design issues and trends while enabling participants to exchange ideas and experiences with faculty and peers. They cover topics in architecture, urban planning, health care and educational facilities design, residential design, sustainability and green design, real estate development, leadership and management.
www.gsd.harvard.edu

L.A. in Wien/Wien in L.A.

July 24-September 13, 2009 This exhibition at the SCI-Arc Library Gallery in Los Angeles features works by Hitoshi Abe, Peter Cook, Zaha

Hadid, Thom Mayne, and Eric Owen Moss juxtaposed with those by R.M. Schindler and Richard Neutra that investigate the architecture of both Los Angeles and Vienna and their respective influences on one another over the last century.
www.sciarc.edu

Eric Owen Moss and Jeffrey Kipnis: A Conversation

July 29, 2009 SCI-Arc is hosting a special discussion and exhibition review between SCI-Arc Director Eric Owen Moss and Jeffrey Kipnis, professor of architectural design and theory at the Knowlton School of Architecture and curator of architecture/design for the Wexner Center for the Arts in Ohio. This conversation takes place at 7:00pm in the SCI-Arc Gallery.
www.sciarc.edu

Anthony Vidler: On the Couch

August 5, 2009 In conjunction with the *L.A. in Wien/Wien in L.A.* exhibition at the SCI-Arc Library Gallery, Anthony Vidler, Dean and Professor of the Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture at Cooper Union, will lecture about Schindler/Neutra, after which he will moderate the On the Couch symposium featuring architects Hitoshi Abe, Peter Cook, Thom Mayne, Eric Owen Moss, Peter Noever and Wolf Prix.
www.sciarc.edu

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THESE, AND ADDITIONAL LISTINGS OF CANADIAN AND INTERNATIONAL EVENTS, PLEASE VISIT
www.canadianarchitect.com



CIRCLE REPLY CARD 109

Five blue tints, new from PPG

PPG Industries has introduced five blues tints to create the architectural glass industry's broadest selection of colour and performance options. Dark-blue Pacifica glass joins the existing Oceans of Color collection (pictured). Light-blue Solarblue is new to the company's Earth and Sky Tones. Architects also can produce three additional aesthetics by combining Pacifica and Solarblue glasses with Solarcool reflective coatings, or by pairing Pacifica glass with subtly-reflective, colour-enriched Vistacool coatings.

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OUGHT NOT



LEFT INTERIOR DESIGN TRENDS OF THE 1970S ARE DEPICTED ON THE THIRD FLOOR OF REECE TERRIS'S *OUGHT APARTMENT* INSTALLATION AT THE VANCOUVER ART GALLERY.

THE VANCOUVER ART GALLERY TACKLES OUR CULTURAL OBSESSION WITH REAL ESTATE AND HOME RENOVATION THROUGH AN EXPLORATION OF RESIDENTIAL INTERIOR DESIGN TRENDS OVER THE PAST SIX DECADES.

TEXT TANYA SOUTHCOTT
PHOTO RACHEL TOPHAM

The Vancouver Art Gallery has been transformed, its rotunda occupied by a six-storey apartment tower until the end of summer. Each level represents a decade in the evolution of apartment living from the 1950s to present day.

As part of the gallery's exhibition series *NEXT: A Series of Artist Projects from the Pacific Rim*, *Ought Apartment* is the work of Vancouver-based artist Reece Terris, whose portfolio draws heavily from his alternate career as a general contractor and home renovator.

The sculpture recalls the condominium tower under construction, a phenomenon present in Vancouver's downtown core over the past decade.

The installation is built largely of aluminum scaffolding supporting six individual residential units that together climb over 60 feet to the domed ceiling. Each level is designed to reflect each decade's interior design and domestic living space trends, furnished by pieces carefully salvaged from Terris's job sites. Otherwise destined for demolition, his collection of reclaimed, recycled and used material has been accumulating in his studio warehouse where it is inventoried according to decade. The nuances of style that distinguish each floor of this tower of design speak to the economy of obsolescence driving the process of home renovation.

Conceived at the height of Vancouver's condo market boom, the installation is perhaps more timely now in the wake of economic downturn. Since the 1980s, intensive high-rise, high-density development in downtown Vancouver has turned the city into a model of liveability, with large tracts of commercial and industrial land rezoned to support rapid residential growth. Major speculative developments have been responsible for much of the city's urban evolution, as well as the evolution of its urban domestic tradition. Constrained site potential, limited access and high amenity costs put space on the downtown peninsula at a premium, and tower living yields the highest return. However, abandoned construction sites and recent proposals to cap residential development in downtown Vancouver suggest changes ahead to ensure land value remains reasonable for commercial development in the downtown.

From an architectural perspective, what is interesting about Terris's sculpture is not only the content but the containers that house it. Each floor plate is based on accurate dimensions and layouts specific to that decade and reflect shifting values within the domestic tradition. Closely linked to our average area of personal living space is our sense of entitlement to that space, which is increasingly in conflict with what is available and what we can afford.

Ought Apartment leaves its audience at the top of the tower rather than at the bottom, ending with the first decade of a new century characterized by a growing awareness of the environmental impact of our daily decisions and lifestyle choices. Charged with a strong sense of duty and moral obligation, the exhibit challenges viewers to look forward to the next decade of development to speculate what form the next storey will take. As architects, we tend to have little decision-making power in a market driven by profit—yet we take great pride in our role as stewards of culture. Let this next challenge be ours. **CA**

Tanya Southcott is an intern architect living and working in Vancouver.

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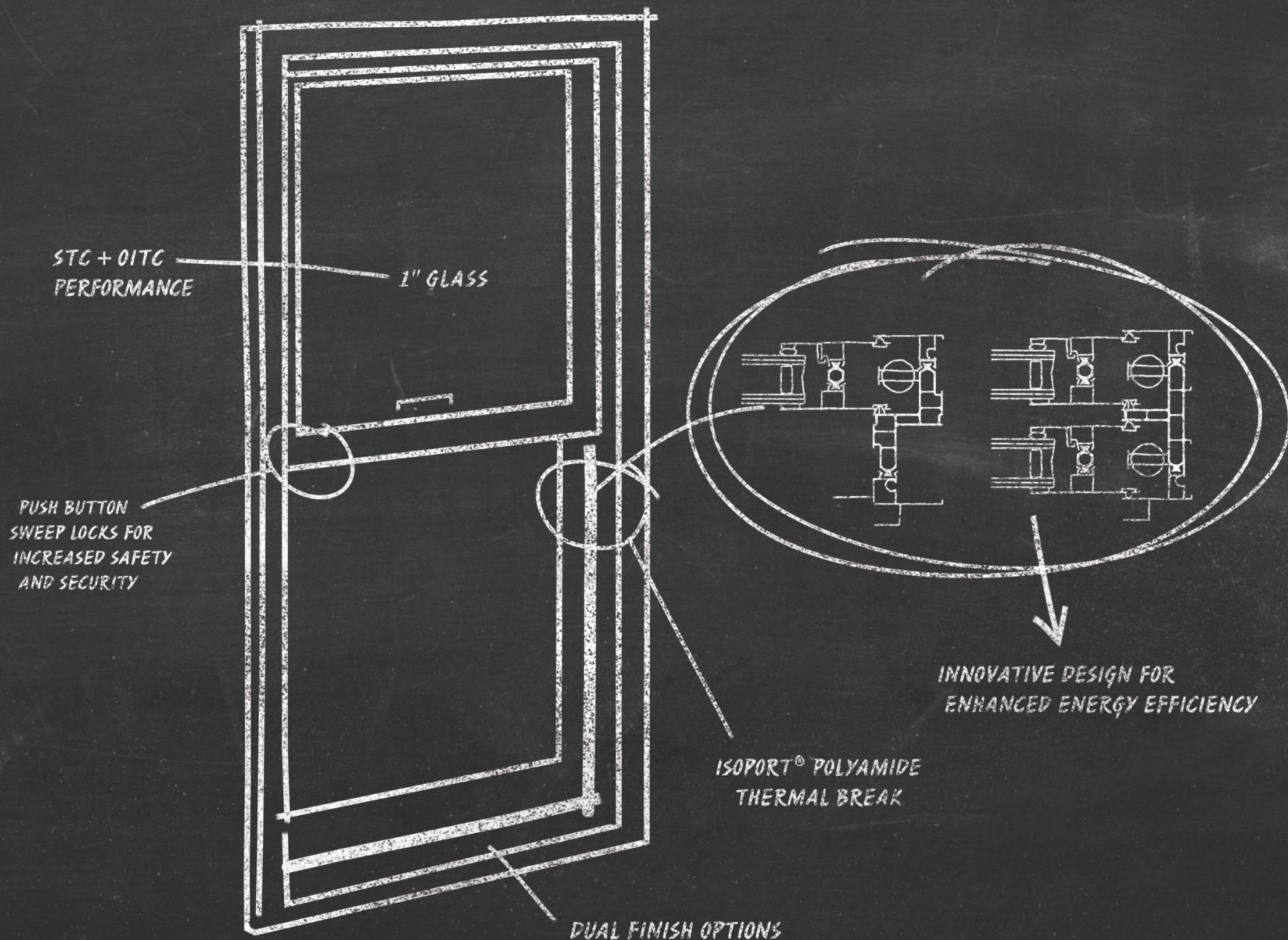
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